

LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES: HOW THEIR USE BY
LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN BURGOYNE AND MAJOR GENERAL HORATIO GATES
INFLUENCED THE ENGAGEMENT AT SARATOGA, 1777

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U. S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the
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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

C. R. LEACH, Major, U. S. Army

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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Leach, C.R., Major, U.S. Army

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This thesis attempts to evaluate the use of leadership principles by the two chief protagonists of the Battle of Saratoga in the Revolutionary War. Several ideas develop as corollaries to the chief theme: (1) Leadership principles will not of themselves insure victory. (2) Ignorance of their effect or their misapplication may contribute to the defeat of a military force. (3) Passage of time does not invalidate the principles of leadership. The criteria of leadership are those set forth in Department of the Army Field Manual 22-100. Leadership is defined in terms of the environment, the leader, and the led, and the thesis presents data on each of these three topics. The presentation illustrates that no military battle is of itself an isolated entity.

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Approved for Publication by:

Wilfred E. Irish Jr., Research and Thesis Monitor
Jayce B. Goodwin, Assistant Research and Thesis Monitor
William M. Garland, Assistant Research and Thesis Monitor

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the individual student author and do not necessarily represent the views of either The United States Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. References to this study should include the foregoing statement.

This thesis attempts to evaluate the use of leadership principles by the two chief protagonists of the Battle of Saratoga in the Revolutionary War. Several ideas develop as corollaries to the chief theme: (1) Leadership principles will not of themselves insure victory. (2) Ignorance of their effect or their misapplication may contribute to the defeat of a military force. (3) Passage of time does not invalidate the principles of leadership.

The criteria of leadership used are those set forth in Department of the Army Field Manual 22-100. Against these principles the actions of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne of the British Army and Major General Horatio Gates of the American Army are measured. Leadership is defined in terms of the environment, the leader, and the led, and the thesis presents data on each of these three topics. The presentation illustrates that no military engagement is of itself an isolated entity.

The political environment in both Great Britain and the newly declared independent states of North America is reviewed. The political direction of the war, as well as the military chain of command on both sides, is discussed to show the influence which the political and military environment exerted on the chief protagonists.

The qualities, conditions, and motivations of the subordinate officers and common soldiers, both British and American, are described, thus illustrating the characteristics of the forces the two major commanders led.

Biographical data on Lieutenant General John Burgoyne of the British Army and Major General Horatio Gates of the Continental Army, the leaders at the Battle of Saratoga, prove these men to be distinct individuals possessed of personal ambitions, motivated by private concerns, and influenced by the environments in which they lived.

The details of the British plan for the Campaign of 1777 and the preparations that were made for its execution are explained. A discussion of the plan is vital to an understanding of the Battle of Saratoga, because the original plan first proposed by General Burgoyne was altered. His execution of the resulting scheme, not wholly his own, was marred by defeat which may in some measure be attributed to the complexity of the plan and lack of coordination between the British Ministry, the commander-in-chief in America, and General Burgoyne himself. The preparations for the campaign of the Canada Army are also described, full responsibility for any inadequacies therein being directly attributed to General Burgoyne, who exercised undisputed total supervisory authority during the preparatory period. Since American plans and preparations, unlike those of the British, entailed only the relatively simple task of arranging to counter the enemy's moves, comparatively little attention is accorded to Colonial preliminaries.

The application and misapplication of the principles of leadership by both major commanders is also discussed. Details are furnished to give an overall view of the conduct of the separate engagements of the Battle of Saratoga. The tactics employed by both major commanders are analyzed to indicate positive or negative application of leadership principles.

Concluding this thesis is an evaluation of the leadership exercised from the inception of the plan of the campaign to the final denouement on the plains of Saratoga. The actions of both Gates and Burgoyne, as reviewed in the text of the thesis, are measured against each principle of leadership previously introduced from Department of Army criteria.

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James B. Goodwin, Assistant Research and Thesis Monitor

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF MAPS	iv
 Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE ENVIRONMENT	6
British Political Climate and High Command American Political Climate and Chain of Command	
III. THE LED	22
The British Forces The American Fighting Man	
IV. THE LEADERS	34
Lieutenant General John Burgoyne Major General Horatio Gates	
V. THE MISSION AND PRELIMINARIES	50
The Plan The Preparations The March South	
VI. THE BATTLE	69
VII. LEADERSHIP EVALUATED	101
BIBLIOGRAPHY	109

LIST OF MAPS

	Page
General Theater of Burgoyne's Campaign of 1777	54
Investment of Fort Ticonderoga	64
Battle of Bennington	67
Battle of Freeman's Farm	73
Battle of Bemis Heights.	83
Attack on Forts Montgomery and Clinton	95
Burgoyne's Surrender at Saratoga	98

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Military leadership is "the art of influencing and directing men in such a way as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect and loyal cooperation in order to accomplish the mission."¹ General rules or fundamental guidelines governing the actions of leadership are called "leadership principles." Considerable interesting divergence occurs in the statement of principles of leadership.² This study will accept as its criteria the eleven principles of leadership stated by the United States Department of the Army.³

- I. Be technically and tactically proficient.
- II. Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
- III. Know your men and look out for their welfare.
- IV. Keep your men informed.

¹U. S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 22-100, Military Leadership, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 3. Hereafter cited as FM 22-100.

²Sherman L. Kiser, The American Concept of Leadership, (New York: Pageant Press, 1954), p. 50, states, "...three fundamental or basic principles—perfection, harmony and organization—are supported by all other principles..." Another version is given by Paul M. Robinett, "Combat Leadership," Armor Magazine (January-February, 1957), p. 21, who writes that the principles of leadership "...reduced to their simplest terms...are Duty, Honor, Country..."

³FM 22-100, pp. 27-37.

V. Set the example.

VI. Insure that the task is understood, supervised and accomplished.

VII. Train your men as a team.

VIII. Make sound and timely decisions.

IX. Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates.

X. Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities.

XI. Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.

The passage of time does not affect these principles. They "represent the best generalizations concerning leadership displayed by successful commanders of the past. Studies of current and future concepts of warfare indicate these principles will be equally valid in the future."⁴

Leadership and command are related, but can certainly not be considered synonymous. Command is "the authority a member of the armed forces lawfully exerts over subordinates by virtue of his rank or assignment."⁵ The commander is that person who is designated to wield such authority. The leader, who influences and directs others, need not necessarily be a commander, but it is obvious that a commander must be a leader if he is to fulfill his role adequately. This study proposes to examine the opposing major commanders of the Battle of Saratoga, General John Burgoyne and General Horatio Gates, to determine how their application of the principles of leadership influenced the engagement.

⁴Ibid., p. 7.

⁵Ibid., p. 4.

Three basic elements affect leadership: the leader, the group, and the situation.⁶ The first element is self-evident; the second refers, of course, to the group being led; the third, the situation, encompasses "organizational structure, cultural characteristics of the unit or group, environmental conditions, personalities, and the mission."⁷

Recognizing that neither the principles of leadership nor the elements which affect it are illustrated solely by examination of events transpiring on a battle field, this study will enquire into various circumstances and events that precede and surround the actual conflict at Saratoga. Biographical data will be presented on Burgoyne and Gates. Attention will be accorded the American and the British fighting man. The political climate and chain of command in both America and England will be discussed. Consideration will be given to campaign plans, missions, tactical execution, and combat service support. Examination of such pertinent material will reveal the basic elements as they existed in the late 18th Century and permit evaluation of Gates' and Burgoyne's application of the various leadership principles.

Unfortunately the passage of time since the American Revolution has obscured or erased many facts, so that not every principle lends itself to thorough analysis in every instance. This difficulty tends rather to stimulate the interested individual to hope that future research can fill existing gaps, round and amplify the entire study.

⁶RB 22-1, Leadership (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U. S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1964), pp. 1-3, 4.

⁷Ibid.

Entangled with analysis of leadership is the question of military success. "The ultimate objective of military leadership is accomplishment of the mission."⁸ However, military success or the accomplishment of mission can hinge on all manner of things, "...tactics, shape of frontiers, speed, happily placed rivers, mountains or woods, intellectual ability, or the use of artillery."⁹ Is an individual less a leader if circumstances over which he has little or no control predicate his defeat? The career of the Confederacy's respected General Robert E. Lee vividly substantiates the thought that the winning of tactical battles is not the only criterion for recognizing leadership. The American Revolutionary Commander-in-Chief George Washington lost many battles but still managed to win both the campaign and recognition as an outstanding leader.

Without in any way contesting the premise that leadership's objective is accomplishment of mission, this study will evaluate Gates and Burgoyne, not primarily in terms of "who won," but rather with respect to application of the eleven stated principles of leadership within the framework of the three stated basic elements.

Perhaps the "great test of success for the leader is the outcome,"¹⁰ but Edward Jennings, in his study on the anatomy of leadership, states, "First, leadership is the leaving of a mark."¹¹ The

⁸FM 22-100, p. 2.

⁹George S. Patton, Jr., "Success in War," Cavalry Journal, XL (Jan.-Dec., 1931), p. 10.

¹⁰Ordway Tead, The Art of Leadership, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1935), p. 81.

¹¹Eugene E. Jennings, An Anatomy of Leadership, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 30.

mark a leader leaves may not be the sort which he would have desired. His own preferences seem to have little relevance to history's eventual judgement. When fate brought Burgoyne and Gates together on one of the American Revolution's most important battlegrounds, each was assured an indelible mark on history's pages. Their encounter was such that today, nearly two hundred years later, their actions, motivations, and personalities are of significance and interest to the student of military history.

CHAPTER II

THE ENVIRONMENT

British Political Climate and High Command

In the England of 1777 there existed a political climate where the royal personage of George III loomed large. The King stood at the top of the British military chain of command and his personal authority was virtually unquestioned. With a well-filled royal purse and the power to make appointments, George III did not hesitate to play one faction against another, buy Parliamentary majorities, and keep that legislative body under his control. In commenting on this situation one writer has termed it "...a dark day for England..."¹ when the King found he could exercise such control. Promise of appointment or its corollary---threat of removal---must have often swayed prominent officials. Such pressure seemed to dictate Burgoyne's vote in favor of the Ministry-sponsored Royal Marriage Act in 1771.²

Although many and varied appraisals of George III's military

¹George M. Wrong, Washington and His Comrades in Arms, Vol. XII of the Chronicles of America Series, ed. Allen Johnson (56 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), p. 62.

²George III wrote to Lord North, "Had Burgoyne failed to do so, I should have felt myself obliged to name a new Governor for Fort William." Quoted in F. J. Hudleston, Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne, (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1927), p. 33.

ability exist in books dealing with this period,³ most writers agree that he displayed an avid interest in military matters, even demanding minute operational details. Allen French writes that, among other things, the King was deeply interested in "...appropriations in Parliament, the choice of regiments for American duty, the method of recruiting, the conditions under which new corps might be raised for the war..."⁴ Unfortunately, despite all the monarch's zeal and minute interest, "...the principles which he followed were quite as often bad as good."⁵ Working under such a commander-in-chief may not have been easy for Burgoyne or any other general.

In two respects regarding the American Revolution George III exercised extremely poor judgment. First, even after July, 1776, he insisted that he was putting down a rebellion in the Colonies, not fighting a war. This placed the conduct of operations not under the purview of the Secretary of State for War, Viscount William W. Barrington, but under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord George Germain.⁶ This arrangement seriously disrupted the normal military chain of command. Second, the King showed singular lack of judgment in the appointment of Lord George Germain to any high

³John H. Preston feels that King George III was not half so stupid as tradition makes him out to be in Revolution 1776, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), p. 162; while F. E. Whitton, The American War of Independence, (London: John Murray, 1931), p. 164, emphatically states that he was "...without the least military experience."

⁴Allen French, The First Year of the American Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 97. Lynn Montross confirms this in Rag, Tag and Bobtail, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 109, in which he states that the King "...supervised every detail of the war with as much attention and authority as a modern chief of staff."

⁵French, op. cit., p. 97.

⁶Helen Augur, The Secret War of Independence, (New York: Duell Sloan & Pearce, 1955), p. 93.

office dealing with military operations. This individual (known as Lieutenant General Sackville until he took the name Germain in 1770) had been courts-martialed for cowardice at the Battle of Minden, dismissed from the service, deprived of several lucrative posts. He had been the subject of an order of the day, directed by George II and read to British regiments in all parts of the world, proclaiming that he was unfit to serve his sovereign in any military capacity whatsoever. "Such a censure, the King said, was worse than death to a man with any sense of honour."⁷

This, then, was the man George III entrusted not only with the political administration of colonial affairs, but also with the conduct of military attempts to suppress the rebellion. Germain, the second link in the British chain of command, controlled the transportation of ordnance, the artillery service, the engineers, fortifications, and all naval affairs not strictly the Admiralty's business. In addition he had charge of feeding the land troops and assumed certain functions of the Treasury, Post Office, and customs service.⁸ Naturally these prerogatives, which could be construed as encroachments upon the duties of his fellow ministers, hardly made him the most popular man in the cabinet.

While it seems remarkable that George III would appoint a person with Germain's history to head an important Ministry, it is not just to imply that the man was totally inept. Previous to the disaster at Minden he had gained extensive military experience in

⁷George M. Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 321.

⁸Augur, op. cit., p. 92.

campaigns on the Continent. Some historians have described him as one of the few men of conspicuous ability in Parliament. He is reputed to have been one of the best speakers in the House of Commons and his vigor of character certainly made him influential in the small cabinet of the time.⁹

Despite Germain's previous military experience and the King's interest in minute detail, both apparently failed to comprehend the American theater of operations and the true nature of Colonial resistance. George III's utter lack of appreciation for the significance of American military geography is aptly illustrated by his reaction to Burgoyne's initial success at Ticonderoga. It is said that he burst into his Queen's boudoir exclaiming, "I have beaten them all, all the Americans!"¹⁰

Another interesting facet of the British political environment, the intermingling of political and military policy, had definite bearing on the exercise of command and leadership at all levels. Numerous military officers were regularly elected members of Parliament. General Burgoyne and several of his subordinates in the Saratoga campaign held seats in that legislative body.¹¹ Those who held Parliamentary seats had opportunity to return to England during the

⁹Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution, p. 321; G. H. Guttridge, "Lord George Germain in Office," American Historical Review, XXXIII (October, 1927), p. 26; George O. Trevelyan, The American Revolution, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), III, 69.

¹⁰Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 161.

¹¹Ibid., p. 115, gives the impression that there were four members of that body in Burgoyne's force. However, only three are mentioned by name. Gates, in a letter to his wife, dated October 19, 1777, wrote that there were "...about a dozen members of Parliament...", as quoted in Diary of the American Revolution, ed. Frank Moore (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners, 1858), I, 511.

winter months to make ex parte statements and to gain the ear of ministers and even the King himself.¹² Furthermore many members of the government seemed not only to have allowed, but to have encouraged letters from subordinate commanders criticizing—and in some cases roundly condemning—the actions of their superiors.¹³ This environment was hardly conducive to the exercise of effective military leadership.

Far from being a stranger to this political climate, General John Burgoyne was, in fact, a product of it. As a member of the Parliament he was aware of the ministerial conduct of the war. He was one of the most prodigious letter writers among the British general officers serving in America. Although his military ability was unquestioned,¹⁴ his military promotions probably owed something to his political connections.¹⁵

The third and final link before Burgoyne in the British chain of command was Sir William Howe, commander-in-chief of the British forces in America. Throughout the period of time that Burgoyne commanded the Northern Expedition Howe was located in Philadelphia and New York. Howe was Burgoyne's immediate superior officer; presumably orders and directives from the King and the Ministry would pass through Howe to Burgoyne. Breakdown of the British chain of command at this

¹²Whitton, op. cit., p. 164. As a case in point, General Burgoyne returned to England during the winter 1775-76 and again in 1776-77. See John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition from Canada, (London: J. Almon, 1780), Appendix I, p. i.

¹³Whitton, op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁴Hudleston, op. cit., p. 17. See also Claude H. Van Tyne, England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 379.

¹⁵Nickerson, op. cit., p. 32.

level contributed to the eventual debacle. Frequently official communications from England bypassed Howe completely and went directly to Burgoyne. Thus at the moment when Howe's action and cooperation were essential to the success of Burgoyne's force, the commander-in-chief of British forces in America was either uninformed, uninstructed, disgruntled, or perhaps a combination of all three.

American Political Climate and Chain of Command

England's political atmosphere was calm compared to faction-torn, sectionally-oriented America's. Political intrigue, personal jealousies, and divided loyalties thrived in the colonies, where a substantial part of the population was openly hostile to the American cause.¹⁶ Each of the separate "free and independent states" reserved most of its effective strength for local defensive purposes¹⁷ rather than providing troops to the Continental Army. Untold difficulties arose because no central authority possessed power to compel compliance rather than politely request it. All central authority which did exist rested with the Continental Congress which could, therefore, be termed the highest echelon in the American chain of command.

Provinciality of delegates greatly influenced Congressional action. Representatives from one section hastily criticized motives and loyalties of compatriots from other areas. John Adams' vitriolic commentary on New York is illustrative:

"It (New York) is incapable of doing Us much good, or much Hurt, but from its local situation.

¹⁶Richard B. Morris, The American Revolution, (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1955), p. 66.

¹⁷R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, Military Heritage of America, (New York: McGraw & Hill Book Co., Inc., 1956), p. 84.

The low cunning of Individuals and their Prostitution plagues Us, the Virtues of a few Individuals is of some service to Us. But as a province it will be a dead Weight upon any side, ours or that of our Enemies."¹⁸

Congressional opinions largely dictated military command changes in the Northern Department prior to and during Burgoyne's march toward Albany.¹⁹ Sectional antagonisms were not confined to Congress. Troops from one locale served reluctantly under officers from another. Such peculiarities threatened to tear the northern army to fragments squarely in the face of Burgoyne's invasion.²⁰

Allegiances to section or state wielded undue influence over selection and appointment of the Continental Army's general officers. Although Congressional rules paid lip service to the "line of succession" and the "merit of the persons proposed," many promotions actually hinged upon "the quota of troops raised...by each state."²¹ Both General Arnold and General Stark, who were to play important roles in Burgoyne's defeat, justly felt that they had been politically denied advancements which they personally deserved.

Congress enjoyed its prerogative of appointing and removing officers and resented any question of its competency in this regard. General Schuyler met swift censure for objecting when Congress removed his medical director; actually Schuyler's objections seem

¹⁸Adams Family Correspondence, ed. L. H. Butterfield, (2 vols.; Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), II, 22. Hereafter cited as Adams Correspondence.

¹⁹Ibid., II, 305.

²⁰Allen Bowman, The Morale of the American Revolutionary Army, (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1943), p. 28.

²¹Journals of the Continental Congress, ed. Worthington C. Ford, (34 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), VII, 133. Hereafter cited as Journals.

particularly reasonable, because he, as a commander, was not even accorded the courtesy of being informed.²² When Generals Greene, Sullivan, and Knox directed letters to Congress questioning the French officer Du Caudray's competence to be Chief of Artillery, the language of the resolution of censure was most explicit. Washington was to

"...(L)et those officers know that Congress consider the said letters an attempt to influence their decisions, and an invasion of the liberties of the people, and indicating a want of confidence in the justice of Congress."²³

John Adams was particularly caustic in his comments concerning the abilities of general officers. In one letter he wished that Schuyler, Putnam, Spencer, and Heath would all resign and called for annual elections of general officers.²⁴ To General Gates he wrote: "We do not choose to trust you Generals with too much power for too long a time."²⁵ Even General Washington was not immune, as Adams was thankful that the glory of turning the tide was not immediately

²² Ibid., VII, 180. This was in reference to the dismissal of Doctor Stringer. The Congressional resolution called Schuyler's letter "...highly derogatory to the honor of Congress..." and directed that Schuyler be advised that his future letters "...be written in a style more suitable to the dignity of the representative body of these free and independent States."

²³ Ibid., VIII, 537. William A. Ganoe elaborates on this in The History of the United States Army, (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1942), p. 48, as he credits Congress as a body with having "...rebuked Stark, displaced Schuyler, ignored Arnold, cast aspersions on Greene and Knox, court-martialled Sullivan, Saint Clair, Wayne and Matthews because they had lost engagements, and ousted Trumbull, the commissary general..."

²⁴ Adams Correspondence, II, 165.

²⁵ Letter from John Adams to General Horatio Gates as quoted in James Wilkinson, Memoirs of My Own Times, (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1816), I, 61. This letter was written in reference to Gates' appointment as a "...dictator in Canada for six months..."

due to the commander-in-chief.

Congress kept the American military leadership in a state of constant turmoil over matters of appointment, promotion, and execution of policy. The atmosphere created was scarcely conducive to loyal, faithful service, but perhaps not all blame rested with Congress. Officers who believed themselves to have been wronged would, with or without having informed the commander-in-chief, appear to present their cases before Congress. John Adams once again took up his pen on this topic: "I am wearied to Death with the Wrangles between military officers high and low. They Quarrell like Cats and Dogs. They worry one another like Mastiffs. Scrambling for Rank and Pay like Apes for Nuts."²⁷

Congress did not limit its supervision of the military to personnel, but also deliberated over such mundane routine as moving companies hither and yon,²⁸ types of buttons to be adopted for Continental uniforms,²⁹ and how much equipment could be procured by the soldiers before they left home.³⁰ If, as Montross states, nothing was more exhilarating to Congress than "dabbling in strategy," then there is much reason to picture the legislators as quite a jolly group.³¹

²⁶Adams Correspondence, II, 361.

²⁷Ibid., II, 245.

²⁸Journals, IV, 207.

²⁹Preston, op. cit., p. 156.

³⁰Diary and Autobiography of John Adams, ed. L. H. Butterfield, (4 vols.; Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), II, 179.

³¹Adams Correspondence, I, 207. In a letter to his wife dated May 29, 1775, John Adams confirmed his fervent desire to be a soldier as he wrote: "Oh that I was a Soldier!---I will be.---I am reading military Books. Everybody must and will and shall be a soldier." See also Lynn Montross, The Reluctant Rebels, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 95.

One problem incessantly plagued Congress—logistic support for the military. Nearly everything needed to keep an army in the field was lacking. Schuyler's state of supply following the fall of Ticonderoga seemed hopeless.³² Congressional efforts to alleviate the critical status of supply had included appeals to France and other European countries for assistance and eventually foreign aid did arrive. Controversy exists as to whether it came in time to be utilized at Saratoga, but evaluation of available evidence indicates that probably much of the equipment for Gates' army was from foreign sources.³³ Congress certainly deserves major credit for such procurement.

In other spheres of military management Congressional effectiveness is more debatable. Some historians contend that the war could have been waged more efficiently had the Congress provided its appointed commander-in-chief with broad guidance and left to

³²Nickerson, op. cit., p. 173.

³³Journals, VII, 211, and VIII, 476, for official notice of the arrival of equipment from France and instructions for its disposition. Historians who support the thesis that the Americans at Saratoga used foreign-procured equipment are John C. Miller, Triumph of Freedom 1775-1783, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1948), p. 109; Claude H. Van Tyne, The War of Independence, American Phase, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1929), II, 111; James B. Perkins, France in the American Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1911), p. 95; and Samuel F. Bemis, The Diplomacy of the American Revolution, (New York: D. Appleton Century Co., 1935), p. 40. The claim for a purely American victory and the absence of foreign aid of any type is, on the other hand, succinctly expressed by John W. DePeyster in Major General Philip Schuyler and the Burgoyne Campaign, (New York: Holt Brothers Printers, 1877), p. 6; and by Henry W. Elson in History of the United States of America, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1905), III, 78.

him greater authority to chart his own specific procedures.³⁴ Of more immediate concern to this study is the direct influence exerted by Congress upon the Battle of Saratoga, such influence being felt in the appointment of leaders, the procurement of equipment, and the raising of the army itself.

Immediately under Congress in the American chain of command was the man the legislators had appointed commander-in-chief of military forces, General George Washington. Without question Washington dominated the American military scene. As the commander-in-chief he had overall responsibility for military operations. Although historians can be found who question his leadership,³⁵ the solidifying force which he exerted throughout the war was in large measure responsible for the American victory.

In command of the main American army and far from the plains of Saratoga, Washington felt responsible for the Northern Department, even though Congress had acted to make it a separate entity.³⁶ Located in New Jersey, Washington could only learn of conditions in the North through reports, which were not always thorough, up-to-date, or accurate. His expressed reaction to the evacuation of Ticonderoga,

³⁴As examples of those questioning Congressional management see Willard M. Wallace, Appeal to Arms, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 271; John R. Alden, The American Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 49; Bowman, op. cit., p. 8; and Preston, op. cit., p. 156. On the other hand Bernhard Knollenberg, Washington and the Revolution: A Reappraisal, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 1, is inclined to support Congressional actions, as is Montross, The Reluctant Rebels, p. 76.

³⁵George A. Billias (ed.), George Washington's Generals, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1964), p. xvii; Charles F. Adams, Studies Military and Diplomatic, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1911), p. 53; and Alden, op. cit., p. 31.

³⁶Journals, VIII, 375.

for example, was based on non-current reports concerning the garrison strength.³⁷

Washington did what he could to assist the Northern Department to halt Burgoyne's advance. He ordered Generals Arnold and Lincoln to the area, detached Morgan's rifle corps from his own army, requested state governors to call up the militia, and furnished three additional brigades of regular troops.³⁸ His analytical forecast of Burgoyne's campaign was amazingly accurate, but he, like others, could not understand Howe's abandoning Burgoyne and putting to sea.³⁹ The assistance outlined plus numerous letters foretelling Burgoyne's defeat constitute the only direct action or influence Washington exercised upon the Battle of Saratoga.⁴⁰

Immediately below Washington in the American chain of command should have been the commander of the Northern Department. At this point confusion enters the scene in the form of the Gates-Schuyler feud. Major General Philip Schuyler had been the Commanding General of the Northern Department until August 4, when he was replaced by Major General Horatio Gates. Vehement controversy concerning the personal characteristics and leadership abilities of these two indi-

³⁷The Writings of George Washington, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick (39 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), VIII, 380, 407, and 438, discusses previously reported strength figures with General Schuyler and Major General William Heath. Hereafter cited as Writings.

³⁸Ibid., IX, 78. Letter to Governor George Clinton.

³⁹Ibid., VIII, 499. Letter to General Gates.

⁴⁰J. T. Headley credits Washington with planning the entire campaign against Burgoyne in Washington and His Generals, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), I, 73.

viduals has arisen among Revolutionary War historians,⁴¹ just as it arose among their contemporaries. Vital to any discussion of leadership at the Battle of Saratoga is an understanding of the hostility between Schuyler and Gates.

Contributing to the feud were the animosities existant between New England and the state of New York.

The muddle involving the separate command which Congress created for Gates in June, 1776, added to a situation already ripe for personal hostility. Schuyler was senior to Gates and was in command of the Northern Department in 1776. In June, Congress appointed Gates as the commander-in-chief in Canada. However, when Gates arrived to take up his post, he found his troops were no longer in Canada, but at Ticonderoga. The resultant dispute over the actual command was referred to Congress for settlement. The question was decided in favor of Schuyler, and Gates was directed to proceed to headquarters. Although both Congress and Washington wished Gates to re-assume his post as Adjutant-General, he succeeded in being appointed as Commander of the Northern Department in April, 1777. Schuyler was appointed once again in May, and Gates was given his choice of either remaining to serve under Schuyler or re-assuming the position of Adjutant General. Gates did neither, returned to Congress, and, following the withdrawal from Ticonderoga, was reappointed in August to command the Northern

⁴¹Knollenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 103, states: "Consequently every adulatory biographer of Washington, apologist for Arnold, trumpet blower for Schuyler and rhapsodist over Lafayette can eulogize the virtues of his hero at the expense of Gates, without running afoul of published material exposing his distortions."

Department.⁴²

The Gates-Schuyler feud eventually involved nearly every general officer in the Northern Department; and while the shifts of command between the two may have seemed reasonable and logical to some Congressional delegates, they were of little assistance to the Northern Army as it prepared to face Burgoyne. Washington himself was baffled by these machinations. In a letter to the Reverend William Gordon on June 29, 1777, he wrote:

"I am too far remov'd from Philadelphia, and have too much business of my own, to know, or enquire into the springs which move Congress to such sudden changes in their Resolutions as have lately appear'd in the Northern Department. It is much to be wished that more stability was observed in a body so respectable, as the Service is really injured by a conduct of this sort."⁴³

Much injury to the service indeed resulted, because Gates and Schuyler each proved reluctant to assume responsibility for actions of his predecessor and, worse still, reluctant to take on new projects while actual retention of command was doubtful. Analysts of this turbulent game of "who has the command today" split concisely into two factions, each claiming that its favorite general wrought miracles in correcting what had been left undone.⁴⁴

⁴²Journals, VII, 364; VIII, 540 and 604. See also Benson J. Lossing, The Life and Times of Philip Schuyler, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1883), p. 164; and Bayard Tuckerman, Life of General Philip Schuyler, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1905), p. 171.

⁴³Writings, VIII, 316.

⁴⁴Succinct examples of these charges and counter-charges can be found on behalf of Schuyler in Ralph V. Harlow, The Growth of the United States, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1925), p. 190; Tuckerman, op. cit., p. 171; and Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 155. Those supporting Gates are R. M. Devens, Our First Century, (Springfield, Massachusetts: C. A. Nichols & Co., 1878), p. 75; Billias, George Washington's Generals, p. 86; Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, p. 195; and Knollenberg, op. cit., p. 6.

Neither of the generals seemed to retain Washington's complete confidence. Schuyler, even though he had attempted to bypass Washington in a move to procure cannon for the Northern Department,⁴⁵ retained the respect of his commander-in-chief until his repeated requisition for supplies which he did not need disillusioned even the patient Washington.⁴⁶ Gates accused Washington of sectional favoritism in the matter of supplying tentage,⁴⁷ and consistently maintained that he was reporting directly to Congress as a separate department commander not under Washington's purview as commander-in-chief.⁴⁸

This situation was not conducive to loyal support of whatever commander happened to be in charge. It was detrimental to discipline and effects could be felt at all levels of command. Of particular interest is how this situation directly affected subordinate commanders.

General Benedict Arnold and Colonel Daniel Morgan were two officers who became adversely embroiled in the Gates-Schuyler hostilities. Arnold and Gates were at one time warm friends. One biographer states that this relationship ended abruptly when Gates learned that

⁴⁵Writings, VIII, 318.

⁴⁶Ibid., VIII, 407. In a letter to Schuyler dated July 15, 1777, Washington wrote; "As you are not unacquainted with our Resources and Military Supplies, I could wish your requisitions only to extend to Articles essential and absolutely wanted. A redundancy of Stores is not only unnecessary, but supplying them is frequently the means of disfurnishing other posts. At this time the Ammunition sent from Peeks Kill could be but illy spared."

⁴⁷Ibid., VIII, 87.

⁴⁸Ibid., IX, 465. See also Henry B. Carrington, Battles of the American Revolution, (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1876), p. 335; and Wrong, Washington and His Comrades in Arms, p. 142.

Arnold had publicly defended Schuyler.⁴⁹ Colonel Morgan, who was serving under Arnold, was at first most cordially received by Gates, but when Arnold, whom Morgan held in particularly high esteem, fell from favor, Gates' ire apparently extended also to the Colonel.

While any discussion of Arnold is inevitably colored by his later defection and treason, there appears to be no taint upon Morgan's character, and it is obvious that his role in the Battle of Saratoga was one of extreme importance. It thus seems patently unjust that Gates excluded Morgan's name completely from the official account of the British surrender⁵⁰ and that the gallant Colonel received no official credit for his praiseworthy and significant actions.

In summary it is clearly evident that the situation at this level in the American chain of command was most confused for two reasons: First, command authority had changed hands too often; and second, it was uncertain whether the Northern Department was, in organizational structure, a separate entity responsible directly to Congress or a portion of Washington's command. Such confusion worked detrimentally throughout the ranks of the Northern Department.

⁴⁹Malcolm Decker, Benedict Arnold, (New York: Antiquarian Press, Ltd., 1961), p. 220. Another biographer of Arnold claims that Gates was already dreaming of superseding Washington and since Arnold and Washington were friends, Gates became angry with Arnold. This idea is expressed by Isaac H. Arnold, The Life of Benedict Arnold, (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1880), p. 168.

⁵⁰James Graham, The Life of General Daniel Morgan, (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856), p. 172, who states that Morgan's name was not included in the official account of the surrender.

CHAPTER III

THE LED

The British Forces

The British regiments of Burgoyne's force were a part of a professional army. According to 18th Century standards, that army was a thoroughly trained, highly disciplined organization.¹ The majority of the enlisted troops were drawn from the lower and middle classes of England's economic and social order. Recruiting officers armed with gin persuaded many to volunteer, while others found themselves preferring military service to imprisonment for crimes.² In contrast to the American, the British soldier had little or no opportunity to familiarize himself with firearms prior to his entry into the service.³ This deficiency did not handicap him when fighting in massed formations which employed volley fire at close range.⁴

¹Trayer S. Anderson, The Command of the Howe Brothers during the American Revolution, (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 19; Reminiscences and memorials of the men of the revolution and their families, ed. Artemas B. Muzzey, (Boston: Estes, 1883), p. 349; John R. Alden, The American Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 69; and Richard B. Morris, The American Revolution, (New York: Van Nostrand Co., 1955), p. 66.

²Alden, loc. cit.

³Claude H. Van Tyne, England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 126.

⁴Alden, loc. cit.

The British soldier was as poorly paid as his American adversary. From his authorized remuneration of eight pence per day the British soldier of the line was forced to forfeit varying sums for clothing accessories and items of maintenance.⁵ His uniform was a mark of distinction. Each arm wore a special color and each regiment had distinctive markings or an emblem of some type.⁶

The British uniforms were a part of the regimental tradition and each soldier spent long hours keeping his uniform and accoutrements presentable.⁷ The distinctive uniform was as much a matter of identification of the type of unit as it was a part of tradition.

Advancement to the commissioned ranks was almost impossible for the British enlisted man. Most officers came from families of wealth and influence. Little or no inquiry or evaluation of abilities normally preceded the granting of commissions. Regimental officers gained proficiency through long years of practice.⁸ Commissions were generally acquired by purchase.⁹ This system of selection of officers seriously lowered efficiency.¹⁰

⁵Willard M. Wallace, Appeal to Arms, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 10.

⁶Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 108.

⁷Richard M. Ketchum (ed.), The American Heritage Book of the Revolution, (New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc., 1958), p. 171.

⁸Alden, op. cit., p. 70.

⁹Wallace, op. cit., p. 10, refers to the price of a lieutenant colonelcy in the line as being 4,500 pounds sterling.

¹⁰Van Tyne, England and America....., p. 127.

The British soldier, like his American counterpart, saw no harm in obtaining the spoils of war. Plunder was an accepted element of 18th Century warfare, although the British army of that era seldom attempted to live off the land.¹¹ Should the British soldier be convicted at a courts-martial, he, like the American, could commonly look forward to flogging.¹²

The British army, despite the disciplined bravery of troops in battle, was generally inefficient and lacked proper administrative techniques.¹³ Man power, especially in the officer ranks, was wasted. A company of thirty eight privates was commanded by a captain who had two lieutenants to assist him. In addition there were two sergeants and three corporals and a drummer.¹⁴ The full strength of a British regiment was never utilized in any overseas theater. One company in each of the two battalions which comprised a British regiment remained in England.¹⁵ Two companies of the twelve, or one-sixth of the available force, could not be utilized except as a replacement pool at the end of a long sea route of communications.

¹¹William Digby, Some Account of the American War between Great Britain and her Colonies, found in James P. Baxter, The British Invasion from the North, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), p. 212. Lieutenant Digby of the 53rd Shropshire Regiment, a part of Burgoyne's force, maintained this journal throughout the campaign. It is one of the primary documentary sources on British attitudes and conduct. Further accounts of the prevalence of plundering are in Alden, op. cit., p. 9. Dixon R. Fox accuses the Germans of being especially notorious plunderers in "Culture in Knapsacks," The Quarterly Journal, XI, (January, 1930), p. 35.

¹²Lynn Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 118.

¹³J. S. Omond, Parliament and the Army, (Cambridge, England: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 60; and Anderson, op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁴Wallace, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁵Francis V. Greene, The Revolutionary War and the Military Policy of the United States, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 29.

The individual soldier who marched south with Burgoyne was practically immobilized by the amount of equipment he was required to carry. In addition to rations the private soldier had his blanket, a knapsack, a canteen, hatchet, his share of the tent equipment and cooking utensils, sixty cartridges, his musket and bayonet, and any side-arms.¹⁶ The German members were worse off still, as their equipment was much heavier and contained additional items.¹⁷

The German troops in Burgoyne's army were a part of the Brunswick and Hesse-Hanau contingents which had been hired by the British government for service in America.¹⁸ They were well-trained, highly disciplined men, although the majority had been forcibly recruited by press gangs.¹⁹ The common German soldier did not get along well with his British comrade,²⁰ although the top echelon of command worked in close harmony. This German recruit was caned by his superiors at the slightest provocation.²¹ The desertion rate was relatively high among the Germans.²²

¹⁶George O. Trevelyan, The American Revolution, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), III, 124.

¹⁷William Kingsford, The History of Canada, (Toronto, Canada: Rowse & Hutchinson, 1893), VI, 217.

¹⁸Le Comte De Segur, Memoirs and Recollections, (London: Henry Colburn, 1825), I, 150.

¹⁹Carl Leopold Baurmeister, Revolution in America, trans. Bernhard Uhlenhof, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1957), p. 11.

²⁰C. E. Bennett, Advance and Retreat to Saratoga, (New York: Union Starr Press, 1927), p. 5. Bruce Lancaster agrees and adds that the Germans were unable to get along amicably in their own ranks in From Lexington to Liberty, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1955), p. 262.

²¹Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, p. 118.

²²Allen Bowman, The Morale of the American Revolutionary Army, (Washington, D. C.: American Council on Public Affairs, 1943), p. 62.

Both the British and German soldiers were so trained and disciplined that they would march forward in the face of accurate, aimed enemy fire.²³ Their discipline, training, and adherence to tradition kept their morale from deteriorating even under adverse circumstances.

This was not true in other components of Burgoyne's army. The Indians had no understanding of the European methods of combat. While employed as skirmishing forces or as advance scout detachments, the Indians tended to disappear, especially if the foe seemed to be strong.²⁴ Burgoyne's Indian auxiliaries were of little value. When he needed them most they deserted.²⁵ Some Canadians and American Loyalists marched with Burgoyne, but their numbers were insignificant, so they contributed little to the army's success. They, too, deserted in times of stress when their assistance was most needed.

Burgoyne arrived in Canada on May 6, 1777, in the Apollo frigate.²⁶ He carried with him the orders of Lord Germain which relieved Carleton of command of the invading army. Carleton turned over command on the tenth of May.²⁷ The army which Burgoyne received did not meet his expectations, for in a letter to Germain, dated May 14, he complained about the lack of Canadians in general and averred

²³Baxter, op. cit., p. 16.

²⁴Memoirs, letters and journals of Major General Riedesel, ed. Max von Eekling, trans. William L. Stone, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1865), p. 89.

²⁵Harrison Bird, March to Saratoga, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 150.

²⁶Digby, op. cit., p. 187.

²⁷William L. Stone, The Campaign of Lieutenant General John Burgoyne, and the Expedition of Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1877), p. 10.

that those few which he had seen were "...awkward (sic), ignorant, disinclined to the service and spiritless."²⁸ He went on to mention a shortage of camp equipment, clothing, and other necessary articles, but remained determined to put the troops "immediately in motion."²⁹

There exists considerable difference of opinion regarding the total strength of Burgoyne's force. By his own account (He had visualized a force of 8,000, according to his "Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada.") he started the campaign with a maximum of 7,213.³⁰ This included only 250 Canadians of the force of 2,000 which Burgoyne had desired.³¹ Some camp followers accompanied Burgoyne's force. At the Parliamentary inquiry it was charged that Burgoyne had encumbered his army with 2,000 women who had to be fed from army stores. Gentleman Johnny called this idea "preposterous"

²⁸ John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition from Canada, (London: J. Almon, 1780), Appendix V, p. x. Kingsford, op. cit., p. 195, states that many Canadians deserted before the army ever left Canada.

²⁹ Burgoyne, loc. cit.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

³¹ Ibid., p. 8, and Appendix III, p. iii, for numbers actually on hand and those requested. John Fiske, with particular reference to the numbers of Canadians, pointedly criticized Burgoyne for the failure to use the "1000 Canadian bush rangers" in Independence of the N w World, Vol. XXII of a History of All Nations, (28 vols.; Philadelphia: Lea Brothers Co., 1905), p. 222. It was admittedly difficult to get an accurate count of a force in 1777. Yet the variations of numbers accredited to Burgoyne are extremely interesting. The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politics and Literature for the Year 1777, (4th ed.; London: J. Dodsley, 1794), p. 144, puts the figure at 7,173 exclusive of artillery. Digby, op. cit., p. 201, gives a total of 6,904, but says he did not count sick, officers' servants, batmen, etc. E. D. Sullivan, counting both British and German troops, arrives at 10,000 in Benedict Arnold, Military Racketeer, (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1932), p. 177. Washington Irving, Life of George Washington, (Hudson Edition; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1857), p. 125, estimates nearly 8,000. J. F. C. Fuller, Decisive Battles: Their Influence upon History and Civilization, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1940), II, 531, states that he adds officers to 7,899 and arrives at a total of 8,200. Kingsford, op. cit., p. 175, gives a total of 7,197.

and stated that it would have been a "fitter subject for derision than refutation..."³²

The British and German contingents were in excellent physical shape, and their morale was high.³³ They had spent the winter in Canada practicing infantry maneuvers adapted for forest fighting³⁴ and engaging in artillery drill.³⁵ Now these disciplined regulars of two nations were ready to march south with the handful of Canadian and American Loyalists and the Indian allies. Internal dissension could arise easily in such a force, which fought for no great cause, but depended solely on its leaders to foster and maintain morale and esprit de corps.

The American Fighting Man

The American army which gathered behind the Freeman's Farm redoubts appeared to be a most inauspicious military force. Supply was inadequate. Political partisanship and sectional loyalties alienated enlisted personnel, while jealousy and intrigue embittered senior commanders. Worst of all, a dark cloud of defeatism hovered gloomily over these rebels who had suffered incessant reverses before

³²Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 127. It is worthy of note that Burgoyne did not challenge the statement that there were women camp followers. He objected only to the numbers alleged.

³³Thomas Anburey, With Burgoyne from Quebec, ed. Sydney Jackman, (Toronto, Canada: Macmillan of Canada, 1963), p. 267. Anburey was a "gentleman" who accompanied Burgoyne's expedition. He was finally given the rank of lieutenant and ended the campaign commanding a company. His accounts of the campaign are an extremely valuable source of documentary information.

³⁴Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 74.

³⁵Bennett, op. cit., p. 5.

the advancing British.

As it faced Burgoyne's veteran troops, this army, which combined militia with regular forces, had the important advantage of numerical superiority.³⁶ The American soldier, who was familiar with the terrain and his weapon,³⁷ created another advantage by shunning tactical systems then prevalent in Europe. Although Burgoyne did not attempt to employ European tactics in the strictest sense, his dispositions did emphasize massed linear formations,³⁸ and in the wooded, broken terrain of Saratoga accurate American fire proved disastrous to those aligned troops.

The common denominator of all warfare is perhaps the individual soldier. What does he do? Why does he do it? The personality of the fighting man of the American Revolution is shrouded today by the mists of time and the fog of patriotic zeal. Some have considered America's revolutionary combatant an undisciplined coward, a selfish looter, and a violator of established rules of warfare.³⁹ Others

³⁶ Burgoyne, *op. cit.*, Appendix XVI, p. lix, for 18,624 as the official total of Gates' army; and p. 85 for the total of 3,719 in Burgoyne's force given by Lieutenant Colonel Kingston, the British Adjutant General.

³⁷ John C. Miller, *Triumph of Freedom 1775-1783*, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1948), p. 429; and Morris, *op. cit.*, p. 65. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 39, states that the American felt superior to his opponent in only one respect, that of marksmanship.

³⁸ Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 530; and Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

³⁹ *Adams Family Correspondence*, ed. L. H. Butterfield, (2 vols.; Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963), II, 135 and 209, for comments on the lack of discipline and the selfish nature of the troops. Allen French, *The Taking of Ticonderoga in 1775: The British Story*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Harvard University Press, 1928), p. 45, includes a British report on the looting by the Americans. Anburey, *op. cit.*, p. 141; and Bird, *op. cit.*, p. 41, discuss the violation of accepted rules of war.

him as ill-fed, ill-paid, ill-supplied, and ill-led.⁴⁰ If he were a member of the regular establishment, he rarely esteemed the militia-man.⁴¹ Those who had left home and family to take up arms for an established period of from one to three years had much reason to resent or belittle militia who might be serving from five days to three months and then returning home.⁴² Many militiamen joined Gates because Burgoyne's army was invading their home territory.⁴³ Others rallied to the call out of desire for remuneration, however small it might be.⁴⁴ Members of the regular contingents fought with hatred of the enemy and tenacious desire for liberty,⁴⁵ but love of liberty

⁴⁰ That these conditions were prevalent in the Northern Army is supported by The Papers of Alexander Hamilton, ed. Harold C. Syrett, (7 vols.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), I, 294; George A. Billias, General John Glover and his Marblehead Mariners, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1960), p. 132; Louis Gottschalk, Lafayette and the Close of the American Revolution, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 69; and William A. Ganoe, The History of the United States Army, (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1942), p. 45. The question of remuneration is discussed in Louis C. Hatch, The Administration of the American Revolutionary Army, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1904), p. 77; and in Ketchum, op. cit., p. 166. Journals of the Continental Congress, ed. Worthington C. Ford, (34 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), VII, 177, reveals that there had been no provisions made for the widows of soldiers killed in battle. (Hereafter cited as Journals.)

⁴¹ Billias, General John Glover..., p. 140. See also Nickerson, op. cit., p. 302, for actions of Stark's militia, who arrived at Saratoga on the morning of the eighteenth of September and departed at noon because their time was up.

⁴² The Record of Connecticut Men in the Military and Naval Service during the War of the Revolution 1775-1783, ed. Henry P. Johnston, (Hartford, Connecticut: The Case Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1889), p. 518.

⁴³ Bowman, op. cit., p. 26; and Morris, op. cit., p. 65.

⁴⁴ Johnston, op. cit., p. 512.

⁴⁵ Bowman, op. cit., p. 102.

sometimes operated to the detriment of discipline⁴⁶ and created further problems for leaders at every level.

Discipline of the American soldier was of much concern to commanders. Washington admonished his officers to look out for their soldiers' welfare⁴⁷ and urged the private soldier to attend divine worship for the good of his soul.⁴⁸ Desertion was a major problem⁴⁹ and flogging a standard punishment. Disciplinary authority rested with the individual commander, who could prescribe trial⁵⁰ and penalty⁵¹ as he saw fit. Should he disagree with a court verdict, he simply directed retrial.⁵² Thus the common soldier had little recourse for redress of grievances.

Some accounts tell of the American soldier looting his fellow countrymen and conducting himself in an unmilitary fashion while on the march.⁵³ He suffered much from disease and lacked adequate medical attention.⁵⁴ Had it not been for his generally hardy physical condition bred by past hardships of colonial living, he might not have survived.

The American soldier initially held the British bayonet in

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 30-32.

⁴⁷The Writings of George Washington, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, (39 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), VIII, 29. (Hereafter cited as Writings.)

⁴⁸Ibid., VIII, 77 and 114.

⁴⁹Ibid., VIII, 128 and 482.

⁵⁰Ibid., VII, 72; and VIII, 29.

⁵¹Charles K. Bolton, The Private Soldier under Washington, (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 65.

⁵²Writings, VIII, 187.

⁵³Ibid., VIII, 38.

⁵⁴Ibid., VIII, 441.

morbid fear.⁵⁵ As his battle experience widened he came to rely on his own expertise with firearms to overcome British use of the bayonet. The American's knowledge of wilderness-style fighting contributed to his ability to stop an advancing line well before the bayonet could be effectively used.

Colonial life had bred a new approach to warfare. The American was willing to carry on winter campaigns and to march and fight at night.⁵⁶ He was also more adept at keeping an organization in being after a defeat. One writer terms this new approach individual initiative.⁵⁷

The American army has been criticized for allowing a great number of camp followers to accompany the troops. Although some of these followers had husbands and brothers in the forces, there were women who followed the army for different reasons.⁵⁸ Washington's references to these camp followers are numerous and even occasioned the publication of special orders concerning contact with them.⁵⁹

Gates' army has been described as almost naked, lacking most essential equipment, and rife with defeatism.⁶⁰ Yet within the span of a few short days this army fought two engagements with a tenacity that deeply impressed the British.⁶¹ Its conduct under fire forced

⁵⁵Anburey, op. cit., p. 97.

⁵⁶Billias, George Washington's Generals, p. xiv.

⁵⁷Anderson, op. cit., p. 20. ⁵⁸Stone, op. cit., p. 248.

⁵⁹Writings, IX, 130.

⁶⁰Gottschalk, op. cit., p. 69, discusses conditions of apparel; Hudleston, op. cit., p. 133, discusses the status of equipment; and Billias, General John Glover..., p. 137, discusses the defeatist spirit.

⁶¹Anburey, op. cit., p. 175, talks of the "courage and obstinacy" with which the Americans fought.

General Burgoyne to drastically revise his pre-conceived opinion. In a letter to Germain following the signing of the Convention he wrote:

"The standing corps which I have seen are disciplined. I do not hazard the term, but apply it to the great fundamental points of military institution; sobriety, subordination, regularity and courage. The militia are inferior in method and movement, but not a jot less serviceable in the woods. My conjectures were very different after the affair at Ticonderoga, but I am convinced they were delusive; and it is a duty to the state to confess it. The panic of the rebel troops is confined and of short duration; the enthusiasm is extensive and permanent."⁶²

Gentleman Johnny was describing the same American soldier who had been ridiculed by many British officials.⁶³ He was praising even the militia upon whom Washington himself had hesitated to depend.⁶⁴ A truly remarkable metamorphosis must have taken place! Desertions had almost ceased.⁶⁵ The American fighting man apparently realized that the dark clouds of defeat were about to disperse.

⁶² Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XV, p. liv.

⁶³ Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 140; The American Journal of Ambrose Serle 1776-1778, ed. Edward H. Tatum, Jr., (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1940), p. 181.

⁶⁴ Writings, VIII, 168.

⁶⁵ Bolton, op. cit., p. 207.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEADERS

Lieutenant General John Burgoyne

John Burgoyne was born in 1722 and received his basic education at Westminster School. As a captain of dragoons in 1743, he eloped with Charlotte Stanley, daughter of the Earl of Derby. Poverty forced him to sell his commission and move to the Continent, where he remained for nine years. In 1756 he was returned to active duty as a captain, a rare occurrence, even in those days of influence and patronage. He participated in three campaigns on the Continent during the Seven Years War. His biographer states that Burgoyne learned to assume responsibility during the expedition against St. Malo. In 1759 two additional regiments of light horse were authorized and Burgoyne was selected to form one of them. He was commissioned a lieutenant colonel and authorized to raise the 16th Dragoons Regiment, which became known as the Queen's Light Dragoons.¹

In 1762 Burgoyne's regiment was sent to Portugal in response to an appeal from the King of that country for assistance in the fight against Spain. Burgoyne's leadership ability and personal

¹F. J. Hudleston, Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne, (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1927), pp. 3-10; and Hoffman Nicker-son, The Turning Point of the Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 32.

bravery quickly became apparent. At the head of his regiment he made a night march against the fortress town of Valentia D'Alcantara. Misled by his guides, he arrived at dawn and, without waiting for his supporting infantry, rode at the head of his regiment to capture the town.²

Following this campaign Burgoyne's military career progressed well. He was commissioned a colonel and made a tour of the Continent to report on European army systems. In 1772 he was commissioned a major general. He supported the Ministry in Parliament and occupied his spare time with literary endeavors until the outbreak of the American War in 1775.³ Varying opinions of Burgoyne's literary efforts exist.⁴

Burgoyne's background, his career, and his abilities have been profusely discussed by writers on both sides of the Atlantic. Personal animosity, political bias, and jealousy or enmity toward the head of an invading army have colored contemporary and subsequent evaluation. One ill-founded rumor—that Burgoyne was an illegitimate son of Lord Bingley—has now largely been discredited.⁵ Apparently Horace Walpole of literary fame originated this tale when Burgoyne antagonized him by refusing to recommend a favorite relative for

² Hudleston, op. cit., p. 17.

³ Ibid., p. 325. He was the author of several plays. The titles are now largely forgotten, but one, The Maid of the Oaks, was quite popular. David Garrick, a leading actor of the times, staged it at Drury Lane Theater in 1774.

⁴ Charles H. Jones, History of the Campaign for the Conquest of Canada in 1776, (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1882), p. 194 fn; Reginald Hargreaves, "Burgoyne and America's Destiny," American Heritage, VII (June, 1956), p. 83; and Nickerson, op. cit., p. 34.

⁵ Jones, loc. cit.; Nickerson, op. cit., p. 31; and Hudleston, op. cit., p. 425.

promotion.⁶

Despite the cloud cast over his origin John Burgoyne became successful in politics, the theater, and the military. One historian declares that his success in these three fields "...proves him to have been more than the casual dilettante, and marks him as one determined to excel."⁷

If leadership in 18th Century warfare can be equated with personal bravery, then General John Burgoyne was, without doubt, one of the foremost leaders of the day. His personal bravery has rarely been the subject of historical controversy; other facets of his ability to lead and command troops have.

During the conduct of the campaign from Canada two officer-diarists recorded their evaluations of General Burgoyne as a leader. One account states that the general was well-received by the rank and file:

"Genl Burgoyne alone engrossed their warmest attachment...his orders appearing more like recommending subordination than enforcing it. On every occasion he was the soldiers' friend, well knowing the most sanguine expectations a general can have of success must proceed from the spirit of the troops under his command."⁸

This author further outlines Burgoyne's command methods:

"The manner he gained their esteem was by rewarding the meritorious when in his power, which seldom failed from the praise which they received, to cause

⁶Allen French, The First Year of the American Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 199.

⁷Harrison Bird, March to Saratoga, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 13.

⁸William Digby, Some Account of the American War between Great Britain and her Colonies, which is found in James P. Baxter, The British Invasion from the North, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), p. 157.

a remissness in duty (to be) odious and unmanly, and a desire of emulation soldier-like and honourable."⁹

Lieutenant Anburey, who also accompanied the expedition, relates that General Burgoyne was "...universally esteemed and respected..."¹⁰

There are less laudatory accounts. Charles Stedman, writing of the American Revolution in 1794, calls Burgoyne's conduct before the surrender at Saratoga "...weak and unfortunate."¹¹ A later writer declares that Burgoyne was interested only in his own advancement and had no thought for the men under his command.¹²

The weight of evidence confirms Burgoyne's positive exercise of leadership in matters concerning his subordinates, but his personal loyalty to his superiors is found wanting. As the junior major general in Boston at the time of the Battle of Bunker Hill Burgoyne wrote several letters in which he pointed out deficiencies in the leadership of General Thomas Gage, the commander-in-chief. Although their intent appeared derogatory, these letters were couched in considerate terms and often faintly praised General Gage's conduct.¹³

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Thomas Anburey, With Burgoyne from Quebec, ed. Sydney Jackman, (Toronto, Canada: Macmillan of Canada, 1963), p. 94.

¹¹Charles Stedman, The History of the Origin, Progress and Termination of the American War, (London: J. Murray, 1794), I, 356.

¹²William Kingsford, The History of Canada, (Toronto, Canada: Rowse & Hutchinson, 1893), VI, 234. This contrasts with A. C. M. Azoy, They Were Not Afraid to Die, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Military Service Publishing Co., 1939), p. 184; and Hudleston, op. cit., p. 11.

¹³Thomas J. Fleming, Now We Are Enemies, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1960), p. 127; French, The First Year..., p. 205, quotes Burgoyne: "...Gage...should have trained his troops to meet the American style of fighting..." This may well have haunted Burgoyne as he moved toward his rendezvous with destiny.

Whether they had any bearing on Gage's recall has never been established.

During his tour as second in command to General Carleton in 1776, Burgoyne continued to commit his opinions of his commander to paper. Commenting on Carleton's decision to abandon Crown Point and return to Canada without attacking Fort Ticonderoga, Burgoyne reported himself quite opposed to this decision. He further stated that Ticonderoga might have been taken and Crown Point surely held if Carleton had used his own good sense rather than the advice of "dull, formal, methodical, fat engineers."¹⁴ Unethical as such a letter may have been, it in no way influenced Lord Germain's decision to replace Carleton as a field commander. This decision had been made and implementing orders issued on 22 August, some months before the operations of 1776 had closed.¹⁵ However, these orders were never received by General Carleton, as the messenger was prevented by weather from reaching Quebec, although the ship was "...three times in the Gulph of St. Lawrence."¹⁶ Carleton's official notification of his being replaced came in a letter from Lord Germain which was delivered in person by General Burgoyne, Carleton's successor.¹⁷ The time sequence is vital, for it proves that Burgoyne did not arrange to supplant Carleton during his visit to England in the winter of 1776-77. However, the charge that Burgoyne maneuvered himself

¹⁴Letter to General Henry Clinton as quoted in Claude H. Van Tyne, England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 126.

¹⁵John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition from Canada, (London: J. Almon, 1780), Appendix IV, p. vii.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 22.

into Carleton's position has persisted.¹⁸

Burgoyne's criticism of his superior, although perhaps not specifically harmful to Carleton, reflects little credit on Gentleman Johnny, who could scarcely expect unquestioned loyalty on the part of his own subordinate commanders, when he himself was remiss in this important aspect of leadership. Despite Burgoyne's criticism of his commander some historians have termed him loyal.¹⁹ In view of the accepted practices of the times, it can be concluded that General Burgoyne was not insubordinate.

As the commander of an invading army General Burgoyne evoked many and varied reactions from his foes concerning his military expertise, his personal character, and his accomplishments in other fields of endeavor. General Washington, in a letter to General Philip Schuyler on July 2, 1777, wrote, "(A) man of Genl. Burgoyne's Spirit and Enterprise would never have returned from England, merely to execute a plan from which no great Credit or Honour was to be derived."²⁰

Wilkinson, in his Memoirs written some time after the campaign of 1777, believed that Burgoyne's conduct marked the soldier who, re-

¹⁸ C. E. Bennett, Advance and Retreat to Saratoga, (New York: Union Scarr Press, 1927), p. 3; and John R. Alden, The American Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 7. Memoirs, letters and journals of Major General Reidesel, ed. Max von Eekling, trans. William L. Stone, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1865), p. 96, contains an earlier allegation concerning the appointment. General Reidesel wrote: "As soon as this news was received, suspicions were entertained that the visit of the latter (Burgoyne) to England had not been solely to arrange his family affairs since such grave changes had been made in his favor."

¹⁹ Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 374; and F. E. Whitton, The American War of Independence, (London: John Murray, 1931), p. 167.

²⁰ The Writings of George Washington, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, (39 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), VIII, 33. Hereafter cited as Writings.

ardless of personal motives, was faithful to his profession and solely intent on the execution of his instructions.²¹ Wilkinson's biographer, James R. Jacobs, regardless of Wilkinson's opinion, asserts that "... (Burgoyne) had few practical ideas about leading troops in the wilderness..."²²

An anecdote of Gentleman Johnny's personal character originated in Boston upon Burgoyne's first introduction to Colonial America. Falkner relates how, at the moment of his landing, Burgoyne acquired a reputation and the nickname "Elbowroom":

"Upon his arrival, it was said, he inquired, 'What is the news?'

"Told that Boston was surrounded by ten thousand provincials, he asked, 'And how many regulars are there in Boston?' When he heard there were five thousand, he threw up his hands.

"What! Ten thousand peasants keep five thousand king's troops shut up! Let US get in, and we'll soon find elbowroom."²³

Authentic or not, this episode suggests a fatal defect in Burgoyne's dealings with Americans. Like George III and Lord Germain, he constantly misjudged their strength, their willingness to fight, and their loyalty to the Crown.²⁴

The Boston civilian of the 1770's was not likely to hold any

²¹James Wilkinson, Memoirs of My Own Times, (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1816), I, 223.

²²James R. Jacobs, Tarnished Warrior, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 14.

²³Leonard Falkner, Forge of Liberty, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1959), p. 182. The basis of this episode cannot be found. His biographer uses the name, but links it to General William Howe, while Burgoyne is described as "Mr. Caper". Hudleston, op. cit., p. 53.

²⁴George M. Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 324, quoting General Charles Lee, who stated that Burgoyne was "...as ignorant of the dispositions of the people of America as he was of those in the moon."

British officer in high esteem and Burgoyne was no exception.²⁵
 On June 20, 1777, Burgoyne published a proclamation that proved extremely offensive to Americans. This proclamation was entirely his own;²⁶ there is no indication that he was directed to issue proclamations to the inhabitants of the territory in which he was operating.²⁷ Its issuance was an error on Burgoyne's part and illustrates another failure to estimate correctly the temper of the local population.

²⁵ Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, was one of the most loquacious commentators on the British occupation of Boston. Her analysis of Burgoyne's character is lucidly set forth in a letter to her husband dated July 25, 1775:

"...(Burgoyne) has left me no room to think that he is possessed either of Generosity, Virtue, or Humanity. His character runs thus---as to Burgoyne I am no Master of Language sufficient to give you a true Idea of the Horrible wickedness of the Man. His designs are dark, His Dissimulation of the deepest die, for not content with deceiving Mankind he practices deceit on God himself by assuming the appearance (like Hutchinson) of great attention to Religious Worship when every action of his life is totally abhorant to all Ideas of true Religion, Virtue or common Honesty. An Abandoned Infamous Gambler of Broken fortune and the Worst Most detestable of the Bedford Gang who are wholly bent on Blood, tyranny and Spoil, and therefore the darling Favorite of our unrivalled Ruler Lord Bute." Adams Correspondence, I, 262.

Mrs. Adams was dismayed by the manner in which the occupation troops were conducting themselves. In the same letter she informs her husband that in the house where General Burgoyne was quartered, a lady saw "...raw meat cut and hacked on her Mahogona Tables, and her superb Damast curtain and cushings exposed to the rain as if they were of no value." Ibid., 261.

²⁶ Hargreaves, op. cit., p. 83, credits Burgoyne's perennial enemy Horace Walpole with attaching the appellation "the Hurllothrumbo of the Wilderness" to Burgoyne for this and similar literary efforts during the campaign.

²⁷ In this instance Burgoyne may well have been influenced by his prior service in Boston. He volunteered to write a peace proclamation for General Gage which Fleming, op. cit., p. 128, calls a "masterpiece of eighteenth century bombast."

The proclamation, quoted in Nickerson's study, begins by listing Burgoyne's numerous titles and appointments.²⁸ This opening occasioned "...a most delicious burlesque..."²⁹ by Francis Hopkinson, an American pamphleteer. Hopkinson's satiric counter-proclamation, which appeals to Burgoyne as the holder of each of the listed offices, did much to counteract intended effects of the proclamation and was considered to have been an "...antidote to popular panic."³⁰ Panic is a strong word. Burgoyne had evoked it by saying:

"I have but to give stretch to the Indian forces under my direction, and they amount to thousands, to overtake the harden'd enemies of Great Britain and America, (I consider them the same) wherever they may lurk."³¹

Inhabitants, loyalist or rebel, of a frontier area where Indian raid was an ever-present danger, did not take Burgoyne's threat lightly. Burgoyne's Indian allies handicapped any British effort to gain local support, particularly after the story of Jane McGree's death became known.³² Certainly the 20 June proclamation increased the difficulties which Burgoyne would face in his march to the Hudson.³³

Historians have debated Burgoyne's military judgment, his per-

²⁸Nickerson, op. cit., p. 120.

²⁹Moses C. Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1897), p. 145.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Nickerson, op. cit., p. 121; and Kingsford, op. cit., p. 180, who states that this was "...one of the blunders constantly committed by him throughout his campaign, and he thus placed in the hands of writers an argument to establish cruelty on his part which only existed in his declamatory rhetoric."

³²This episode is discussed in CHAPTER V.

³³Henry B. Carrington, Battles of the American Revolution, (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1876), p. 306.

sonal conduct, and his troop-leading procedures. When examining the personal conduct of Gentleman Johnny it is well to remember that "...all kinds of political and social gossip about the Generals of the war of 1776-1781 have been made pivot points for judgment of military conduct."³⁴

Burgoyne did not care to share the privations of the common soldier, and his methods of supplying his personal wants have been censured---although officers, American and British, during the Revolution typically enjoyed certain luxuries then held to be commensurate with their rank. Criticisms of Burgoyne's personal conduct range from matters such as allocating a large portion of available transport for his personal equipment³⁵ to entertaining a mistress throughout the campaign.³⁶ There are comments concerning his demand for his personal dining service³⁷ and his barrels of Madeira wine.³⁸ He has been accused of playing cards until dawn of October 7, the day of the Battle of Bemis Heights.³⁹ Burgoyne's personal actions were

³⁴Ibid., p. 319.

³⁵Nickerson, op. cit., p. 188, states that Burgoyne "...had loaded no less than thirty carts with his own creature comforts." Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution, p. 324, concurs and adds that Burgoyne's personal supplies "...included two barrels of Madeira and two of rum."

³⁶An Autobiography of America, ed. Mark Van Doren (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1929), p. 127, contains an extract from the Journals of the Baroness Reidesel, who seems to have been the primary source for the story of the mistress. Others have embellished the story, including Hudleston, op. cit., p. 134; and Willard M. Wallace, Appeal to Arms, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 161.

³⁷Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), I, 214.

³⁸See Footnote 35 supra.

³⁹Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), I, 44.

more the rule than the exception in 1777. If he deserves reprimand for having a mistress, then equal condemnation must go to General Sir William Howe.⁴⁰ Apparently no one interested in the topic of personal indulgence has ever computed the size of the personal baggage train of any general officer of the American Revolution other than Burgoyne. Possibly he has been singled out for condemnation, not because his baggage was excessive, but because he supplied an accurate accounting of his own transport.

The British protagonist that was to face the American army on the plains of Saratoga was a man of unquestioned military ability. One mistake, that of underestimating the enemy that he was to fight, contributed to his defeat. His personal traits have been impugned by many, while his abilities have been largely overlooked.

Major General Horatio Gates

Major General Horatio Gates was born July 26, 1727. Like Burgoyne, his opponent at the Battle of Saratoga, Gates was unjustly alleged to have been an illegitimate child.⁴¹ The circumstance of his mother's employment as a housekeeper to the Duke of Leeds enabled Gates to pass his early life in an atmosphere of culture and genteel traditions.

There is little known of Gates' schooling. His first military command was a captaincy he purchased for 400 pounds in September, 1754.

⁴⁰Charles Lee, *Memoirs*, (Dublin: Printed for P. Byrne, J. Moore, et al., 1792), p. 424, referring to Howe, states: "He shut his eyes, fought his battles, drank his bottle, had his little whore..."

⁴¹Samuel W. Patterson, *Horatio Gates*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941), p. 4. Gates was rumored to have been the son of Horace Walpole, Burgoyne's enemy. This was disproven by Walpole himself.

While serving in this rank in Nova Scotia he married Elizabeth Phillips, the daughter of a lieutenant, who had some influential connections at home. Not long after the marriage Captain Gates was ordered to duty in New York.⁴²

Gates' first combat experience was with Braddock's expedition in 1758. He was wounded in action, apparently as he tried to hold his company in the ranks, although he himself never specified how he had been wounded. Gates served in various locations in and around New York for the next seven years. He was appointed brigade major to General John Stanwix, who commanded British forces in Pennsylvania.⁴³

In 1761 Gates was a member of a British expeditionary force which sailed for Martinique to take that island from the French. As aide to General Robert Monckton, commander of the expedition, Gates was directed to carry the official report of the engagement to England. After he received an appointment as a regular major in 1762, he returned to America, where his desired appointment as aide to General Jeffery Amherst was denied. He then sought and received permission to return to England.⁴⁴

In 1772 Major Gates returned to America to settle in Virginia. He is referred to as Major Gates, even by George Washington, although his actual military status is in doubt.⁴⁵ In 1775 the Continental Congress appointed Horatio Gates the Adjutant General of its army with

⁴²Ibid., pp. 6-9.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 15-19.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 22-26.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 40. His biographer states that Gates had been appointed a lieutenant colonel by Governor Dunmore of Virginia in 1773. However, Nickerson, op. cit., p. 278, states that Gates had sold his major's commission before he sailed for Virginia.

the rank of Brigadier General.⁴⁶ His experience in administration was an invaluable asset in his new position. He was successful in organizing the regular administrative functions and in setting up recruit training.⁴⁷

In his capacity as Adjutant General, Gates quickly made friends with influential members of the Continental Congress. John Adams was a frequent visitor to Army Headquarters at Cambridge in 1775 and 1776.⁴⁸

Gates, whose combat command experience had been limited to leading a company in 1758, was in 1776 appointed commander of the Northern Department, of which Fort Ticonderoga was a key part. In revamping the defenses of this fort the Americans neglected to fortify Sugar Loaf Hill, the key to the entire defensive structure. Gates was aware that this hill was within artillery range of the fort; his failure to take appropriate action is inexcusable.⁴⁹

During Gates' second tour as Commanding General of the Northern Department in April and May, 1777, he did not even visit Fort Ticonderoga. He is alleged to have been absorbed in correspondence with members of Congress in an effort to keep Schuyler from regaining the command position. His only guidance to General Arthur St. Clair, in command at Fort Ticonderoga, was "...to call lustily for aid of all kinds, for no general ever lost by surplus numbers or over-prepara-

⁴⁶Journals of the Continental Congress, ed. Worthington C. Ford, (34 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), II, 97.

⁴⁷Nickerson, op. cit., p. 279.

⁴⁸Patterson, op. cit., p. 52.

⁴⁹Nickerson, op. cit., p. 131. Lieutenant Twiss, Burgoyne's engineer officer quickly recognized its importance. Anburey, op. cit., p. 137.

tion."⁵⁰

Despite these apparent deficiencies in command, Gates was liked by the common soldier. He endeared himself at one point by ordering extra rations of rum to be served.⁵¹ On other occasions his easy-going manner was more acceptable to New England militiamen than the strict discipline of Schuyler.⁵² Gates made every attempt to provide for the troops under his command. Once he retained for his own troops clothing which had been allocated to several militia regiments at Peek's Kill, New York. This prompted a letter from General Washington in which he described Gates' action as being "...most extraordinary..."⁵³

Gates did not get along well with General Washington. In the first place Gates believed that he had a separate command directly under the jurisdiction of the Continental Congress and not a part of Washington's main army.⁵⁴ Secondly, Gates imputed that Washington was favoring one section of the country over another with regards to the supply of tents for the Northern Department. Washington believed that the troops in this department were mainly stationed

⁵⁰ Bayard Tuckerman, Life of General Philip Schuyler, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1905), p. 171; and George O. Trevelyan, The American Revolution, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), III, 93.

⁵¹ George A. Billias (ed.), George Washington's Generals, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1964), p. 86.

⁵² Benson J. Lossing, The Life and Times of Philip Schuyler, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1883), II, 164.

⁵³ Writings, VIII, 237.

⁵⁴ Ibid., VIII, 79. See also George M. Wrong, Washington and His Comrades in Arms, Vol. XII of The Chronicles of America Series, ed. Allen Johnson, (56 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), p. 142; and Jones, op. cit., p. 34.

at permanent sites and would not need as many tents as the main army which was constantly on the move. Gates took exception to this decision and his letters on the subject provoked the commander-in-chief.⁵⁵ A third documented difficulty between Washington and Gates occurred as an aftermath to the Battle of Saratoga, when Gates did not report his victory to Washington, who was informed of the success only by Congress. This prompted another letter from the commander-in-chief to Gates.⁵⁶

Although Gates had the support of the New England delegation in Congress in his attempts to supplant Schuyler, his actions on the floor of Congress were not the most diplomatic. On one occasion he conducted himself in such an ungentlemanly fashion that Congress considered a resolution barring his further appearance before that body.⁵⁷ Despite this, he was selected by a vote of the delegates to replace Schuyler in July, 1777, when Washington declined the opportunity to name a commander for the Northern Department.⁵⁸

Gates displayed a valuable ability to understand the aspirations and limitations of the militia soldier.⁵⁹ This may have stemmed from his own military background, his long service in colonial America,

⁵⁵Writings, VIII, 87.

⁵⁶Ibid., IX, 465. His manner of congratulating Gates on his victory is a lucid example of Washington's ability with the pen. He professed that the reports which he had received did not bear Gates' signature, which would have made them authentic.

⁵⁷Lossing, The Life and Times of Philip Schuyler, II, 185; and Patterson, op. cit., p. 134.

⁵⁸Writings, IX, 8; and Journals, VIII, 604.

⁵⁹Billias, George Washington's Generals, p. 92; and Patterson, op. cit., p. 129.

or his friendship with John Adams. His reception upon his arrival at camp in August, 1777, attests to his popular reputation among the troops.⁶⁰

The commander of the American forces gathered at Freeman's Farm possessed little military experience. He had, however, instilled an offensive spirit into his troops by making a movement forward from the camp on the Mohawk River. His great advantage as he waited for Burgoyne's advance was his understanding of his adversary. He knew Burgoyne to be a gambler,⁶¹ and Gates was prepared to let the British commander make the first move.

⁶⁰Lynn Montross, Rag, Tag and Bobtail, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 135.

⁶¹Billias, George Washington's Generals, p. 96; Hudleston, op. cit., p. 185; and James R. Jacobs, Tarnished Warrior, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 36.

CHAPTER V

THE MISSION AND PRELIMINARIES

The Plan

Two years had elapsed since "the embattled farmers...fired the shot heard round the world" at Concord Bridge. For the American cause these had been lean, hungry years, but here and there a breeze of hope had fanned the spark of liberty in the hearts of fighting troops and political leaders. Among such bright spots as existed were the resistance at Bunker Hill, the capture of Fort Ticonderoga, the withdrawal of British forces from Boston, and the daring maneuver of General George Washington against the unsuspecting Hessian soldiers at Trenton in December, 1776. These victories were sorely needed to inspire the despair-ridden colonial forces. Well had Thomas Paine written concerning the "summer soldier and sunshine patriot," for as the year 1777 dawned the Continental army was little more than a "rabble in arms."

The few American victories coupled with the apparent inability of the British forces to strike the decisive blow convinced the political hierarchy in England that new plans were necessary. The overall strategic objective—putting down the rebellion—had not changed. The question was how to accomplish this with efficiency and dispatch.

The whole problem proved a dilemma for the British government.

It could not content itself with imposing certain pains and penalties upon the American government; it had to destroy that government. Furthermore it had to destroy the revolutionary organization in such a fashion that a majority of the people in the colonies would, after the first disappointment of defeat, be reasonably content under restored British rule.¹ In England public opinion opposed most actions the Ministry had thus far undertaken.² A constant stream of correspondence and personal statements estimated the majority of the colonists to be loyal.³ Yet the rebellion had to be suppressed if the authority of Britain was to be upheld. Did the answer lay in an operation along the Hudson-Champlain route?

The importance of the Hudson-Champlain route to the colonial establishment as well as to Canada had been pointed out by both the French and British armies in the French and Indian War.⁴ Early in the present conflict the British General Sir Guy Carleton had correctly forecast use of this route by a colonial force invading Canada and urged General Gage to make impregnable the fort at Ticonderoga,

¹Trayer S. Anderson, The Command of the Howe Brothers during the American Revolution, (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 10, states: "This necessity ruled out immediately the use of mere force. Force there must be, but it had to be mixed with persuasion and so designed as to strike at the vulnerable points of revolutionary morale. The more subtle the unhinging of the American will to resist, the smaller would be the aftermath of discontent."

²Claude H. Van Tyne, England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 378.

³Ibid.

⁴Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 57.

guarding the route from Canada to New York.⁵

Sir William Howe, several weeks before he replaced General Thomas Gage as Commander-in-Chief, had proposed that an army of fifteen thousand men attack New York from the sea while four thousand regulars, Canadians, and Indians operate from the side of Canada, and five thousand troops remain to hold Boston.⁶ George III had reputedly directed the use of the Hudson-Champlain route for an invasion from Canada.⁷

General John Burgoyne had been Carleton's second in command during the inconclusive operations of 1776. After the end of the campaign General Burgoyne obtained permission to return to England on a leave of absence. It was while he was in England that the plan for the conduct of operations in 1777 was formulated.

"The essential element of a plan is (that) it offers a definite course of action and a method of execution."⁸ A good plan should:

1. Be capable of accomplishing the mission.
2. Be based on facts and valid assumptions.
3. Utilize existing resources, providing the necessary organization, continuity, direct contact, and control.
4. Be flexible, simple, and fully coordinated.⁹

⁵George M. Wrong, Canada and the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 230.

⁶Anderson, op. cit., p. 110.

⁷Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 376, says that the King was so precise as to have recorded the hour, day, month, and year of his idea.

⁸ST 101-5-1, Staff Organization and Procedures, (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U. S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1964), p. 82.

⁹Ibid.

The plan for the campaign from Canada was inherently weak because it did not meet the above criteria.

Before analyzing the plan itself, the matter of authorship must be resolved, for it is upon this point that General Burgoyne later attempted to defend his failure of execution.¹⁰ There is a variety of historical opinion as to the true authorship of the plan. Some writers ascribe it completely to Lord Germain; others give Burgoyne full credit for the complete plan; more realistically credit is divided between Burgoyne, Germain, and King George III; still other historians take the safe approach and state simply that the plan originated in the Cabinet.¹¹ The matter of authorship should not have vitally affected the execution of the plan, but it is important to remember that the plan Burgoyne attempted to execute was not entirely his own, as Germain later implied.¹² A review of the existing

¹⁰ John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition from Canada, (London: J. Almon, 1780), p. 2.

¹¹ J. W. Fortescue, A History of the British Army, (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1902), III, 205; H. E. Egerton, The Causes and Character of the American Revolution, (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 120; and William Kingsford, The History of Canada, (Toronto, Canada: Rowse & Hutchison, 1893), VI, 120, all credit Germain. On the other hand, William Hunt, The History of England, (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1905), X, 172; J. F. C. Fuller, Decisive Battles: Their Influence upon History and Civilization, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1940), II, 525; and The Annual Register or a View of the History, Politics and Literature for the Year 1777, (4th ed.; London: J. Dodsley, 1794), p. 121, all give full credit to Burgoyne. Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, The Growth of the American Republic, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942), I, 213; G. H. Guttridge, "Lord George Germain in Office," American Historical Review, XXXIII (October, 1927), 29; and Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 382, all take the realistic approach. Finally Justin Winsor, Narrative and Critical History of America, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1888), p. 312; Amos Blanchard, The American Biography, (Cincinnati, Ohio: A. Salisbury, 1832), p. 175; and Jane Clark, "Responsibility for the Failure of the Burgoyne Campaign," American Historical Review, XXXV (April, 1930), 543, all place the responsibility where it logically belongs.

¹² Burgoyne, op. cit., pp. 2-3.



General Theatre of Burgoyne's
Campaign of 1777

Extracted from Elroy M. Avery, A History of the United States and Its People, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1909), p. 90.

sources relative to authorship indicates that the plan was proposed originally by Burgoyne, subsequently commented upon by the King, and probably altered by Lord Germain.¹³

As first outlined in Burgoyne's proposal entitled "Thoughts for Conducting the War from the Side of Canada," the plan envisioned an army moving via Lake Champlain to link with a smaller force moving down the Mohawk Valley in the direction of Albany. Several alternatives were proposed. This combined force could join General Howe's main army; or, after opening the route of communication to New York, it could remain on the Hudson River, thus allowing General Howe to operate with his entire force to the southward.¹⁴ Other alternatives were suggested by Burgoyne, but will not be considered herein. Proper execution of this plan would establish control of the historic Hudson-Champlain route and thus divide the Colonies. This cutting of the "long narrow band of rebellion in two" has been termed "correct strategy."¹⁵

King George III generally approved of the original plan, but made one significant comment. In his own handwriting the Monarch set the objective for the campaign. He wrote explicitly, "The force from Canada must join him (Howe) at Albany."¹⁶

¹³The Spirit of 'Seventy-Six, ed. Henry S. Commager and Richard B. Morris, (2 vols.; Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1958), I, 543, refers to the copy of the plan in the British archives on which King George III had made several comments in his own handwriting.

¹⁴Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix III, p. ii.

¹⁵Nickerson, op. cit., p. 48.

¹⁶Francis V. Greene, The Revolutionary War and the Military Policy of the United States, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 78.

Some historians feel that the plan failed because it was unsound; others feel that the plan itself was basically valid, but details of execution were accomplished improperly or not at all.¹⁷ Analyzing the plan in terms of the principles of war, Colonel Dupuy states that it violated the principles of the objective, simplicity, control, mass, and surprise.¹⁸

Was the plan capable of accomplishing the mission? An analysis of the proposals contained in the "Thoughts" reinforced by King George's handwritten comments makes it reasonably clear that the primary mission of the Canada Army was to reinforce General Howe. Burgoyne should not have been surprised to receive orders to accomplish this mission. Contained in a letter from Lord Germain to General Carleton, these orders read "...direct the officer so detached to proceed with all possible expedition to join General Howe, and to put himself under his command."¹⁹ Given the proper force and having effected proper coordination, Burgoyne could have accomplished this mission.

Was the plan based on valid assumptions? Burgoyne made several assumptions pertaining to the operation. Among the most important were, first, that the enemy would be in great force at Ticonderoga and would fortify other strong points; and, second, that the route by South Bay and Skenesborough would be impractical because the enemy

¹⁷ Fuller, op. cit., p. 525, believes the plan was sound. George O. Trevelyan, The American Revolution, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), III, 72, criticizes it, while John H. Preston, Revolution 1776, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), p. 162, calls it the work of "blockheads."

¹⁸ R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, Military Heritage of America, (New York: McGraw & Hill Book Co., 1956), p. 92.

¹⁹ Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix IV, p. vii.

would be in force on Lake George.²⁰ A general assumption, not specifically stated in the plan, was the feeling in official circles that the invading army would receive support and assistance from the local population.²¹

The first assumption concerning the enemy's fortifications was the basis for the large train of artillery.²² The second led Burgoyne to the much-criticized movement via Skenesborough. Even though Lake George happened to be clear of enemy forces, Burgoyne elected the option of moving overland, later justifying this choice by implying that a retrograde movement would have had an adverse psychological effect.²³

On paper the plan seemed simple and flexible. However, these two qualities as well as execution hinged largely on coordination. Distances between commanders involved plus poor communications and lack of rapport created a complexity in the realm of coordination that proved beyond solution. Since both Burgoyne and Germain referred to "intended junctions" with Sir William Howe, it is logical to assume some action was required on Howe's part. However, the limited action Howe took proved too little and too late.

²⁰ Ibid., Appendix III, p. ii.

²¹ This misjudgment of colonial reaction continued to plague the British Ministry until the end of the war. Some of the historians who discuss this point are Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 140; Greene, op. cit., p. 211; and Anderson, op. cit., p. 31.

²² For a variety of opinion on the amount of artillery see Burgoyne, op. cit., pp. 10 and 68; Nickerson, op. cit., p. 165; Willard M. Wallace, Appeal to Arms, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 147; and Harrison Bird, March to Saratoga, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 284.

²³ Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 12.

Howe's failure to contribute to this campaign has intrigued historians and military analysts since 1777. Speculations offered are as diverse as the backgrounds of their proponents. The fact that Howe did not move northward is important. The reasons he did not do so are not, once it is established that he was aware of his expected participation. Other theories as to why he did not move will not be discussed.

Did Howe know of the overall plan and particularly of the importance of his own role? Did he specifically know that he was to move up the Hudson River to "effect a junction"? The adherents to the theory of the "pigeon-holed dispatch" say he did not. They assert that Lord Germain erred in not assuring that Howe's orders were signed and dispatched.²⁴ Without becoming tediously involved with the ramifications of the correspondence between Howe, Germain, Carleton, and Burgoyne, it can be definitely established that Howe was fully aware of the plan for the campaign of 1777 and the role he was expected to play, although he did not receive a specific directive as to his participation.²⁵ There can be no other reason for his warning Carleton of his inability to assist Burgoyne²⁶ or for his instructions to

²⁴The story, attributed to Lord Shelburne, has Lord Germain on his way to a holiday in the country. He stopped by his office to sign the orders, but found they had not been "fair copied" and, rather than have his horses stand in the cold and be behind schedule, left. The orders were pigeonholed and forgotten for some time. A. C. M. Azoy, They Were Not Afraid to Die, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Military Service Publishing Co., 1939), p. 191; Fuller, op. cit., p. 526; and Winsor, op. cit., p. 295, all discuss this point in detail.

²⁵Sydney G. Fisher, The True History of the American Revolution, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1902), p. 332; Anderson, op. cit., p. 256.

²⁶Letter from Howe to Carleton quoted in The Spirit of 'Seventy-Six, I, 544.

Clinton to make a diversion in favor of Burgoyne.²⁷

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the actions taken by Burgoyne in preparing to execute the approved plan. In addition, there will be a brief chronological summary of the preliminary actions during the march to the Hudson River. This will enable the reader to appreciate the condition of Burgoyne's army as it encamped on the plains of Saratoga, a halt on the march to Albany, its final objective.

The Preparations

The preparation phase began when Burgoyne arrived in Canada with instructions to take command of the army. He found that the troop strength assembled by General Carleton did not meet his expectations. However, as discussed elsewhere in this paper, he determined to begin operations. Other difficulties plagued Burgoyne, and his inability to cope with them is an indication of his lack of leadership ability.

Of vital concern to Burgoyne was the lack of land transport. Carleton had maintained the water transport in a commendable state of readiness,²⁸ a logical course based on his experiences of the previous year. That campaign had moved almost entirely via a water route; and Carleton, having until the sixth of May received no orders to the contrary, was evidently preparing for the same type of operation in

²⁷The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of His Campaigns, 1775-1782, ed. William B. Willcox, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 66.

²⁸Thomas Anburey, With Burgoyne from Quebec, ed. Sydney Jackman, (Toronto, Canada: Macmillan of Canada, 1963), p. 116.

1777. Requirements for land transportation had obviously been given second priority and no great amount had been procured.²⁹

Burgoyne must have been aware of this situation. He arrived on May 6, and an entire month passed before he made a requisition upon Carleton for additional transport.³⁰ His biographer suggests that he was occupied during this time "...preparing seige operations on the wife of his commissary..."³¹ Burgoyne obviously did not exercise proper command supervision over this vital phase of his preparations and remained either uninformed or misinformed until too late to take decisive practical action. Then, as now, this could only be termed deficiency in leadership and ineptitude in command.

There is a general consensus that Burgoyne's means of transportation were inadequate,³² but there is a difference of opinion as to the effectiveness of what he did to remedy the said deficiency.³³

²⁹Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 383; and Nickerson, op. cit., p. 103, both blame Carleton for the serious shortage.

³⁰Nickerson, op. cit., p. 103, states that no requisition was made until June 7, when he asked for "four hundred additional horses for the artillery and for five hundred carts with two horses each for general transport, fourteen hundred horses in all." Wallace, op. cit., p. 117, states that Burgoyne required 1500 horses for the artillery and the rest of the transportation. Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 111, places the requirements for horses at 1268. This was exclusive of any horses for the artillery. Despite the authorized allowances which Burgoyne quotes, the shortage of horses was so serious that Bird, op. cit., p. 12, states, "... (I)n Canada a horse fit for a gentleman to ride was nowhere to be found."

³¹F. J. Hudleston, Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne, (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1927), p. 77.

³²Anburey, op. cit., p. 97; Hunt, op. cit., p. 176; and Van Tyne, England and America..., p. 383.

³³Nickerson, op. cit., p. 103, says that "...the five hundred little Canadian two-wheeled carts which were hastily tacked together were made for the most part of unseasoned wood..." Bird, op. cit., p. 22, uses this same figure and further states that many broke down

Burgoyne himself does not specifically mention any shortage of equipment before the expedition got under way, but does mention the shortage of drivers and, during the campaign, the shortage of horses.³⁴ Whether or not he requisitioned and received 500 carts will remain a matter of debate. A shortage of transport did exist; with Burgoyne rested responsibility for recognizing this inadequacy and taking appropriate action.

Command emphasis seemingly was lacking in the security of intelligence information, but this deficiency is perhaps not attributable to Burgoyne. He was, according to one historian, "...mortified to find a paper handed about town describing the whole design of the campaign as if copied from Germain's orders."³⁵ Not only the inhabitants of Canada, but also the Americans seemed to know the

after the first day's journey and required extensive repairs. However, in his testimony before the Parliamentary Committee, Captain Money, deputy quarter-master general, stated that "...only 180 carts could at any one time be mustered; the number of ox-carts I really forget, but I believe between 20 and 30." Burgoyne, *op. cit.*, p. 41. Even if a deficiency in memory is granted, Captain Money could hardly have forgotten about 320 carts, since these were under his personal supervision as "commissary of horse."

³⁴Burgoyne, *op. cit.*, p. 7, for statement on shortage of drivers and Appendix VIII, p. xx, relative to the shortage of horses which had been contracted for in Canada and "not more than a third part was yet arrived."

³⁵Var Tyne, *England and America...*, p. 383. Anburey, *op. cit.*, p. 94, states, "...We have more dangerous enemies at home than any we have to counter abroad, for all transactions that are to take place are publicly known long before they are given out in orders, and I make no doubt but you will be as surprised as the General was, when I tell you that the whole operations of the ensuing campaign were canvassed for several days before he arrived, who no doubt supposed that in giving out his orders he was communicating an entire secret."

details of the coming campaign.³⁶

The March South

June 30, 1777, may be regarded as the beginning of the campaign, for on this date the whole army had assembled at Crown Point and was ready to move. The Indian allies had been welcomed as members of the expedition and their allegiance to the King had been assured.³⁷ Burgoyne himself was confident of success and wished to instill this same spirit in the troops. His order of the day set the tone of the expedition:

"The army embarks tomorrow to approach the enemy. The services required on this expedition are critical and conspicuous. During our progress occasions may occur, in which, nor difficulty, nor labour, nor life are to be regarded. This army must not retreat."³⁸

³⁶Carl Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), p. 43, tells the story of a British messenger captured by the Americans and interrogated by General Schuyler as to details of the coming campaign. Nickerson, op. cit., p. 104, agrees with the thesis that the plan was common talk on the streets of Montreal, but says that Burgoyne was mistaken in his supposition that the Americans knew of it. Charles Stedman, The History of the Origin, progress and termination of the American War, (London: J. Murray, 1794), I, 326, states that the Americans had prior knowledge of the details of the campaign. The Writings of George Washington, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, (39 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), VIII, 277, confirms this prior knowledge at least as early as June 20, 1777.

³⁷Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix VI, p. xii. This is the famous speech in which Burgoyne urged the Indians to restrain from bloodshed except when opposed and forbade them from putting the aged, women, children, and prisoners to the hatchet or knife, even in time of actual fighting. This speech caused such comment in England that Edmund Burke ridiculed it in the House of Commons. He pretended to be the keeper of the lions following a riot and addressed them: "My gentle lions, my humane bears, my sentimental wolves, my tender-hearted hyenas, go forth: but I exhort ye as ye are Christians and members of a civilized society, to take care not to hurt man, woman, or child." Quoted in Hudleston, op. cit., p. 153.

³⁸Burgoyne, loc. cit., p. 8.

The expedition, whose start had so enthralled one observer,³⁹ was proceeding despite inherent deficiencies of the plan, lack of preparation and leak in security. Burgoyne reviewed the procession as it went by. He made a point of seeing and being seen by every soldier of the main body.⁴⁰ Little could he have suspected that the next time he would have occasion to witness a full review would be at Saratoga when his troops grounded their arms.

Burgoyne's objective, geographically speaking, was Albany, New York, some 240 miles south of the St. Lawrence River. His initial success at Fort Ticonderoga, so easily accomplished, merely reinforced his belief that the Americans had no military ability.⁴¹ His pursuit of the retreating army of General St. Clair was marked by victories at Hubbardtown and Fort Anne and the occupation of the abandoned Fort Edward. With justifiable pride he wrote to Lord Germain detailing the actions of the campaign.⁴²

But then the momentum of Burgoyne's advance was lost. He decided to move via the overland route rather than to return to Ticonderoga and move via Lake George. His route had literally to be carved out of the wilderness. Forward movement hinged upon how much bridging had to be done and how many trees had to be cleared.⁴³ In-

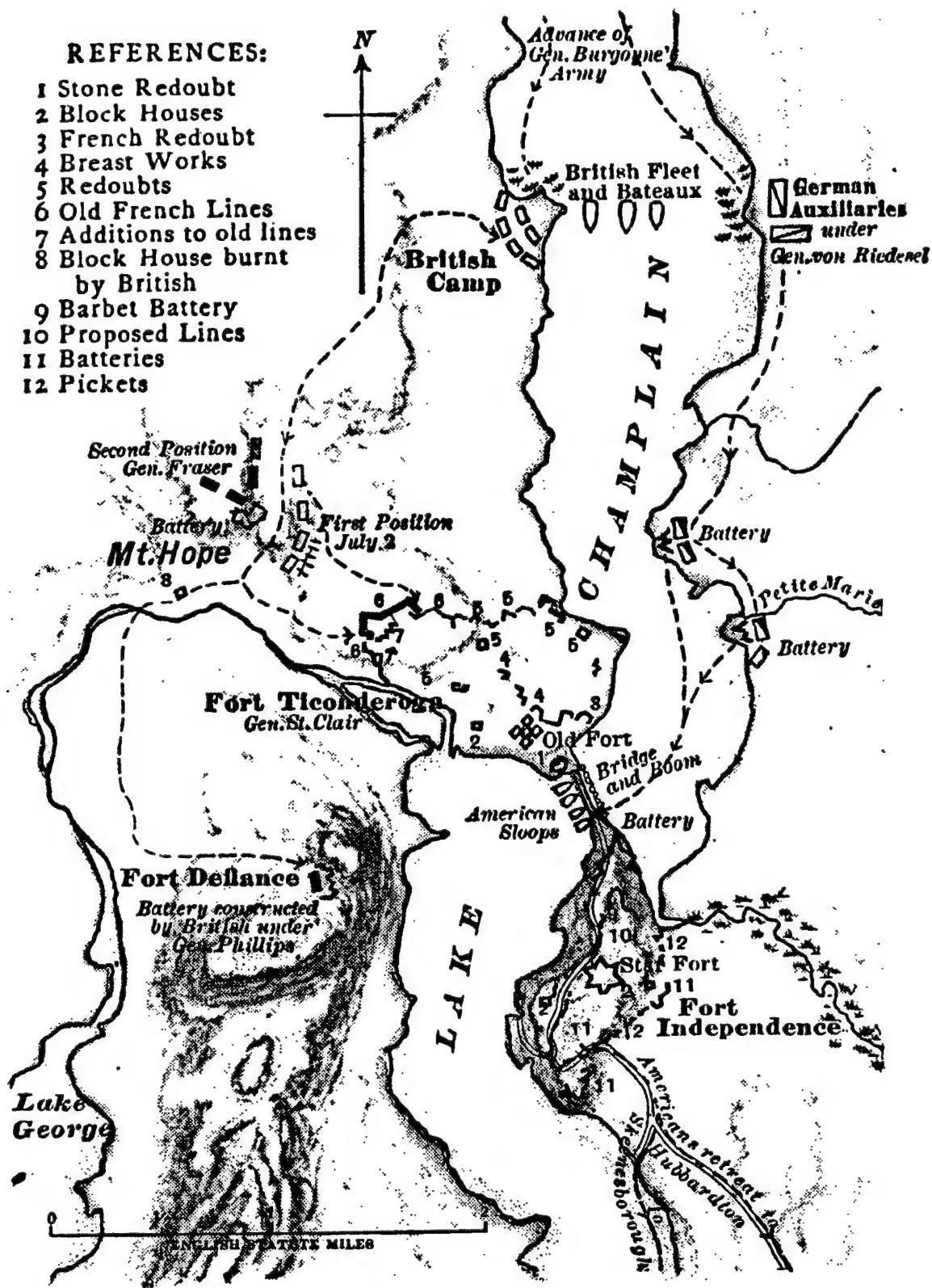
³⁹Anburey, op. cit., p. 131.

⁴⁰Bird, op. cit., p. 24.

⁴¹William Digby, Some Account of the American War between Great Britain and her Colonies, which is found in James P. Baxter, The British Invasion from the North, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), p. 204 fn., which quotes a letter from Burgoyne to Earl Hervey, dated 11 July, 1777.

⁴²Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix, p. xiv.

⁴³Anburey, op. cit., p. 152. Benson J. Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Six, (New York: Edward Walker, 1847), p. 235, states that Burgoyne had to construct forty bridges.



Map of the Investment of Fort Ticonderoga

Extracted from Elroy M. Avery, *A History of the United States and Its People*, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Purrows Brothers Co., 1907), p. 93.

adequacy of land transport became painfully evident. When the main body arrived at Fort Edward on the bank of the Hudson River on July 30, the rate of march had been approximately one mile per day.⁴⁴

During this advance to Fort Edward Burgoyne's Indian allies began to desert the expedition. One explanation given for this was Burgoyne's reaction to the death of Miss Jane McCrea.⁴⁵ Upon being informed that a party of his Indians had been responsible for this event, he determined upon swift justice. In his quest for the alleged killer Burgoyne offended Indian leaders. Although he did not punish the responsible brave once the probable consequences had been pointed out, the damage to Anglo-Indian relations had been done.⁴⁶ The story of the death of Jane McCrea, embellished by the retelling, did much to encourage recruiting for the Colonial forces which were eventually to oppose Burgoyne.⁴⁷

⁴⁴Trevelyan, op. cit., III, 123. Henry B. Carrington, Battles of the American Revolution, (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1876), p. 328, agrees with the rate of march, but estimates the distance at sixteen miles. Bird, op. cit., p. 67, says the distance travelled was twenty three miles.

⁴⁵Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 99.

⁴⁶Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Six, p. 235 fn.; and Anburey, op. cit., p. 156.

⁴⁷There are as many versions of the death of Jane McCrea as there have been writers on the subject. It is mentioned herein to illustrate the difficulty of arriving at the true facts or even an agreed version of many events which occurred during this period. There is disagreement on every point of the story except the fact that she was dead. On the manner of her death: (1) She was tomahawked by the Indians: J. A. Spencer, History of the United States, (New York: Johnson, Fry & Co., 1858), I, 499. Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Six, p. 235; and Anburey, op. cit., p. 156, support this thesis. (2) She was shot by the Indians: E. D. Sullivan, Benedict Arnold, Military Racketeer, (New York: The Vanguard Press, 1932), p. 182, is the spokesman for this theory. (3) She was shot by the pursuing Americans. This is supported by Digby, op. cit., p. 235. There is also disagreement as to how she came to be with

It took Burgoyne from July 30 to September 13 to build up his supplies, bridge the Hudson, and start forward movement once again. This time served only to accumulate a twenty five or thirty day level of supply, but Burgoyne felt obliged to delay no longer. He still believed himself bound to force a junction with Sir William Howe, despite the fact that no operation in his favor had been launched.⁴⁸ Tremendous effort was required to transport all supplies from Canada. The water route contained three portages, varying in length from one to fourteen miles, where the boats had to be moved from one body of water to another.⁴⁹ Particularly descriptive is Anburey's comment about Burgoyne's situation: "... (F)or the one hour that he can devote in contemplating how to fight his army, he must allot twenty to contrive how to feed it."⁵⁰

The gravity of Burgoyne's logistic problem dictated his decision to dispatch an expedition to Bennington, where, as rumor had it, the Americans had a large store of provisions.⁵¹ The force which Burgoyne detached under Lieutenant Colonel Baum to secure the

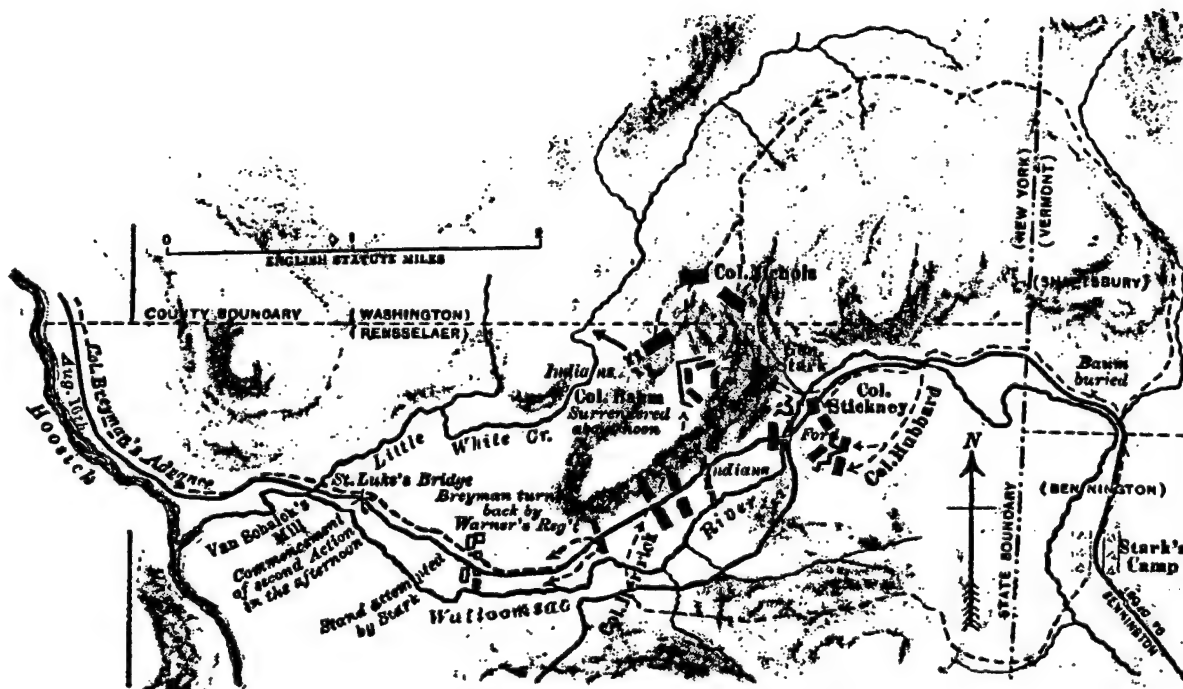
the Indians in the first place. However, later writers can scarcely be criticized when two different versions of this event appeared in the same issue of the Pennsylvania Evening Post of August 12, 1777, which is quoted in Diary of the American Revolution, ed. Frank Moore, (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribners, 1858), I, 476.

⁴⁸Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix IX, p. xxiv.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 41; Kingsford, op. cit., p. 115; and Carrington, op. cit., p. 328.

⁵⁰Anburey, op. cit., p. 162.

⁵¹Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 104, in which he states that he desired to expand General Reidesel's original plan for an expedition into the Hampshire Grants. See also Nickerson, op. cit., p. 240; and Trevelyan, op. cit., p. 128, for further discussion of this mission.



Map of the Battle of Bennington

Extracted from Elroy M. Avery, A History of the United States and Its People, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1909), p. 190.

stores at Bennington was defeated by General John Stark's militia. Baum's reinforcements, under Lieutenant Colonel Breyman, met the same fate. Thus at Bennington Burgoyne lost a considerable, although not overwhelming, number of his effective troops and gained nothing.⁵²

The thirteenth of September found the crossing of the Hudson completed and the British army encamped on the plains of Saratoga.⁵³ This move had complicated Burgoyne's communications with Canada, not an accomplishment that he greatly relished, but he could not "effect a junction with Sir William Howe" unless he defeated the Americans in front of him, and he could not engage said Americans in battle unless he crossed the river. The time for plans and preliminaries had passed. Decisive combat lay ahead.

⁵²Of utmost importance to Burgoyne, he had received on 28 August the news that St. Leger had been routed at Fort Stanwix as recorded in Digby, op. cit., p. 256.

⁵³Anburey, op. cit., p. 170, states that thirty days of supply had been accumulated.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE

The culmination of Burgoyne's campaign came in two separate engagements near Saratoga in September and October, 1777. To picture accurately this culmination, it must be considered in five distinct phases:

- (1) the preparation, 8 September to 19 September,
- (2) the Battle of Freeman's Farm, 19 September,
- (3) the long wait, 20 September to 7 October,
- (4) the reconnaissance in force at Bemis Heights, 7 October,
- (5) the retreat, 8 October, which culminated in negotiations

leading to surrender on 17 October. The final capitulation on the plains of Saratoga was anti-climactic and followed as a matter of course.

The preparatory phase was an important one for the Americans. When Gates arrived to assume command on August 19, he found his army encamped at the mouth of the Mohawk River. His first action, and one for which he must receive due credit, was to move the army some thirteen miles forward to the vicinity of Stillwater. Here he attempted to establish a defensive position, but found that it could be made untenable. Thus a new location was sought and once more the army moved forward to the vicinity of Bemis Heights, where, under the direction

of the Polish engineer Koscuisko, fortifications were established.¹

Gates—or one of his staff—had an appreciation for key terrain, for these fortifications were established at the narrowest pass that lay in Burgoyne's path to Albany. "Here the river, bending to the westward, cramps the road into a narrow defile overlooked on the west by bluffs which rise steeply more than a hundred feet above the stream."² Gates' fortifications took the general form of a half circle three-quarters of a mile in extent, projected to the north.³ Other fortifications were established to dominate the meadows along the river and the terrain in front of the half circle.

The defensibility of these fortifications was never thoroughly tested. One flaw existed in the defensive plan: the failure to fortify or at least to outpost a hill which dominated the position on the west. Had Burgoyne been able to take possession of this hill and establish his artillery upon it, he could have made Gates' fortifications untenable.⁴ This hill may have been General Fraser's objective on September 19,⁵ although available evidence does not clearly support this point of view. In any event Gates was remiss for neglecting to secure this

¹Hoffman Nickerson, The Turning Point of the Revolution, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 289; and Bernhard Knollenberg, Washington and the Revolution: A Reappraisal, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 22.

²Nickerson, op. cit., p. 290.

³Henry B. Carrington, Battles of the American Revolution, (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1876), p. 336.

⁴George F. MacMunn, The American War of Independence in Perspective, (London: Bell, 1939), p. 182.

⁵John Burgoyne, A State of the Expedition from Canada, (London: J. Almon, 1780), Appendix XIV, p. xlvii. See also William Kingsford, The History of Canada, (Toronto, Canada: Rowsell & Hutchinson, 1893), VI, 239.

high ground.

Gates' most effective gesture of leadership during the preparatory phase was imparting to his force the spirit of the offensive. Paradoxically he accomplished this while he was actually searching for defensible terrain. When Gates ordered the army to move forward toward Stillwater, it was the first American advance during the entire campaign. All previous movements had been forced marches away from Burgoyne's army toward the final position established at the mouth of the Mohawk by General Schuyler. This order had a tremendous effect on the morale of the American army and did much to assure Gates' stature with his troops. The movement forward has been described as a "tonic,"⁶ during which the troops "cheered the elderly General Gates as he rode along the line of march..."⁷

While the Americans prepared defensive fortifications to stop his forward progress, Burgoyne had moved south in a leisurely fashion until upon September 17 he established his camp about four miles from Gates' main body.⁸ During this forward movement there had been some skirmishing, foraging parties had been attacked, and repair parties working on bridges had been harassed.⁹ As a result of these small actions Lieutenant Digby of Burgoyne's force concluded that the Americans "...would never allow us to go into winter quarters till we had gained

⁶ George A. Billias, General John Glover and his Marblehead Mariners, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1960), p. 139.

⁷ Harrison Bird, March to Saratoga, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 169.

⁸ Burgoyne, loc. cit.

⁹ Ibid.

some great advantage over them..."¹⁰

Burgoyne had made up his mind to proceed to Albany after re-reading his orders for what he believed was the "hundredth time."¹¹ Obviously he had to pass through or around the American force before him. He chose to attack the enemy main strength in an attempt to dislodge it from its fortified position. However correct his tactics were, he apparently launched his attack without adequate intelligence. Although his biographer claims that he knew the location of Gates' camp,¹² the weight of evidence indicates that he was not cognizant of the exact location, extent of fortifications, or strength of Gates' army.¹³ Two circumstances may have hindered Burgoyne from gathering adequate intelligence: the desertion of his Indian allies and the screen established in front of Gates' army by Morgan's rifle corps.¹⁴

Lack of information may have been one of the reasons why Burgoyne split his force for the advance on September 19. Had he better known the strengths and weaknesses of Gates' fortifications, his scheme of maneuver might have been different. His decision was to march for-

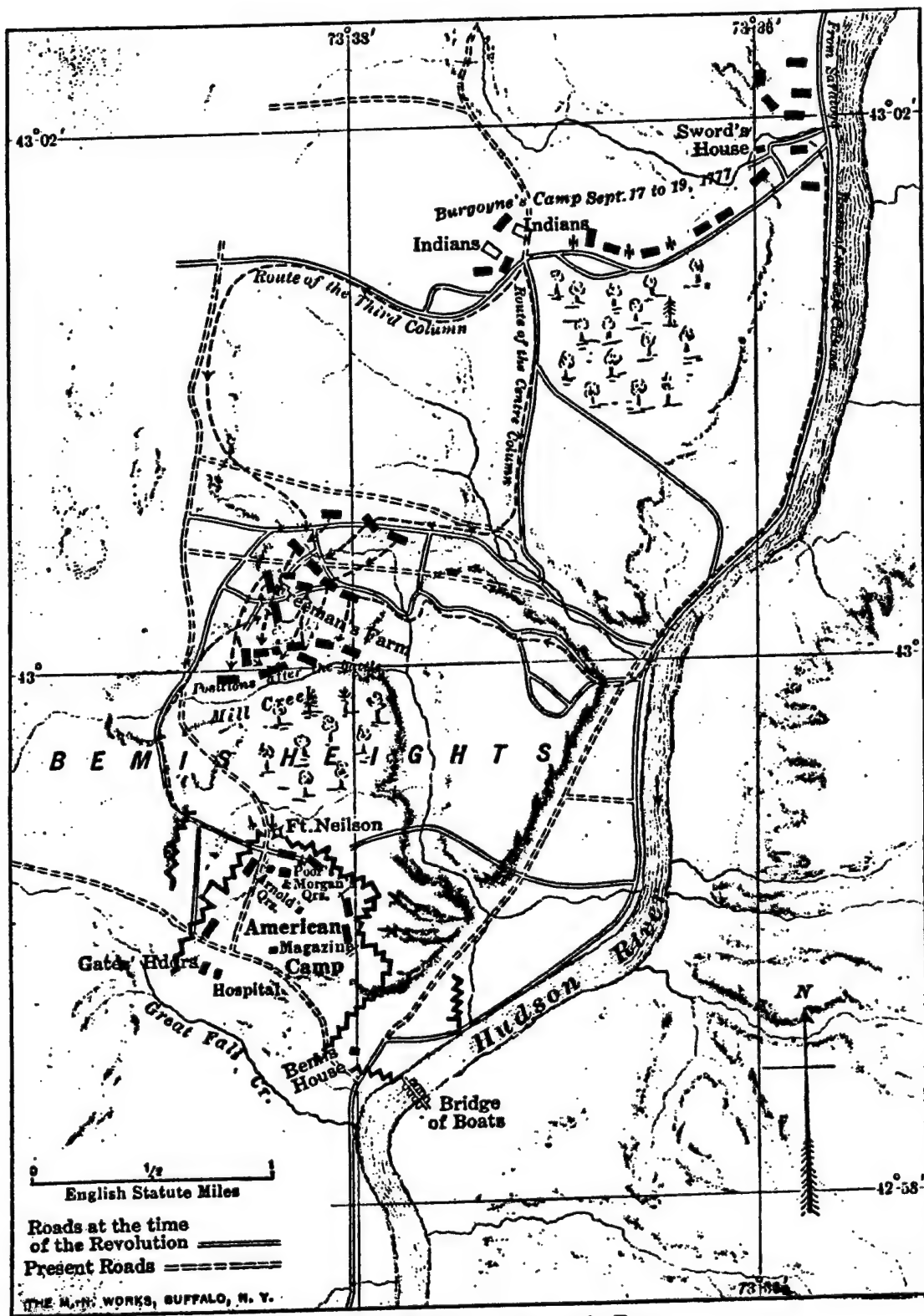
¹⁰William Digby, Some Account of the American War between Great Britain and her Colonies, which is contained in James P. Baxter, The British Invasion from the North, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell's Sons, 1887), p. 269.

¹¹Ibid., p. 15.

¹²F. J. Hudleston, Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne, (Indianapolis, Indiana: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1927), p. 186.

¹³Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 123, for his comments on how difficult the gathering of information was. See also Nickerson, op. cit., p. 299; William L. Stone, The Campaign of Lt Gen John Burgoyne and the Expedition of Lt Col Barry St. Leger, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1877), p. 43; and James Wilkinson, Memoirs of My Own Times, (Philadelphia: Abraham Small, 1816), I, 240.

¹⁴James Graham, The Life of General Daniel Morgan, (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1856), p. 141.



Map of the Battle of Freeman's Farm

Extracted from Elroy M. Avery, *A History of the United States and Its People*, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1909), p. 113.

ward in three columns. General Reidesel's column, which included the artillery, was to move along the river; Burgoyne himself would lead the center; Brigadier General Fraser was to move along the high ground on the right. When all columns had arrived at pre-selected locations, a signal gun was to be fired to coordinate the general advance.¹⁵

Since there was no available means of communication (other than the planned signal gun) to coordinate action, Burgoyne had, by splitting his force, relinquished overall command. As the maneuver was planned and executed, he could control only the center column. He could not influence the majority of his force, and success was to depend entirely upon the abilities of Reidesel and Fraser, not Burgoyne, the commanding general. Also the columns were so separated as to almost preclude mutual support, although Reidesel did take the initiative of moving to the aid of the center column.¹⁶

Burgoyne may have adopted this plan of attack because of his underestimation of the force opposing him.¹⁷ Although Carrington compliments Burgoyne on the "excellence of the order of battle... adopted,"¹⁸ the lack of communications alone should have frightened the commander. The scheme proved to be an invitation to defeat.

¹⁵Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlvi.

¹⁶Ibid., p. xlix.

¹⁷Claude H. Van Tyne, England and America, Rivals in the American Revolution, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 420.

¹⁸Carrington, op. cit., p. 341. However, John R. Alden criticizes the formation in The American Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), p. 143.

This plan of attack specified no objectives other than the enemy force itself. Had Burgoyne known the importance of the high ground on the American left, Fraser would probably have been directed to concentrate his efforts toward its seizure. Although Dupuy believes that Fraser's force did, in fact, have this high ground as its initial objective,¹⁹ Kingsford feels that the movement in that direction was accidental.²⁰ Analysis of the actions which took place would indicate that no such objective was assigned, and that Burgoyne probably did not identify the high ground as a decisive piece of terrain.

From the American side of the field accounts of the engagement are clouded by the controversy over General Arnold's presence as a troop commander. Since the question of Arnold's presence directly affects American leadership, a summary of the conflicting contentions must be considered before a conclusion can be drawn. Those who credit Arnold with tactical direction of the battle have Gates sulking in his tent.²¹ Others place Arnold on the field and make the question

¹⁹ R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, The Compact History of the Revolutionary War, (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1963), p. 247.

²⁰ Kingsford, op. cit., p. 239.

²¹ Those supporting the proposition that Arnold was on the field are: Justin Winsor, Narrative and Critical History of America, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1888), p. 315; Isaac H. Arnold, The Life of Benedict Arnold: His Patriotism and His Treason, (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1880), p. 174; J. T. Headley, Washington and His Generals, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), I, 180; Jared Sparks, The Library of American Biography, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834), III, 116; Malcolm Decker, Benedict Arnold, (New York: Antiquarian Press, Ltd., 1961), p. 251; Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field Book of the Revolution, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1850), I, 44, says that Gates was intoxicated. See Nickerson, op. cit., p. 473, for his comprehensive analysis of this question of Arnold's presence and his conclusion as to his direction of the battle.

of his being reinforced by Gates the matter of dispute.²² Still others aver that Arnold was not on the field at all and that tactical direction rested solely in the hands of the American regimental commanders.²³

It is difficult if not impossible to ascertain the historical truth in this controversy. One thing is certain: General Gates was the commander of the American forces and, if he chose to conduct the battle through his subordinates, he alone was solely responsible. On the basis of available evidence, it is concluded that Arnold did, in fact, appear on the field and lead the American troops on the afternoon of September 19. To him must go credit for tactical direction of the American troops.

On the British side there is no question of the presence of General Burgoyne on the field. In personal command of the center column he has been described as being everywhere and doing "every thing that could be expected from a brave officer."²⁴ His presence

²²Gates' refusal to reinforce Arnold is supported by George O. Trevelyan, The American Revolution, (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907), III, 166; Henry C. Lodge, The Story of the Revolution, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), p. 165; and Winsor, op. cit., p. 305. However, Charles Neilson states that Arnold received reinforcements in Burgoyne's Campaign, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1884), p. 148. Burgoyne himself lends credence to the Americans being reinforced, as he stated that the enemy was "continually supplied with fresh troops." Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlviii.

²³The original source of the story that Arnold did not participate apparently came from Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 245. See also Knollenberg, op. cit., p. 22. For comments concerning the direction of the battle see Lynn Montross, The Reluctant Rebels, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 217; Bruce Lancaster, From Lexington to Liberty, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1955), p. 311; and James R. Jacobs, who states that Gates kept Arnold in camp in Tarnished Warrior, (The Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 37.

²⁴Digby, op. cit., p. 274.

was needed, for the battle in the center did not go according to plan. The American riflemen took a heavy toll of Burgoyne's army.²⁵ However, General Reidesel's move to support the center column contained the American attack, and, as darkness fell, the British retained control of the field.²⁶ However much his personal leadership might be praised, Burgoyne forfeited command of his force by heading the center column. He could not command without communication with his subordinates. He had sacrificed overall leadership.

Meanwhile the Americans had succeeded in halting the British advance by shifting the bulk of defensive forces to meet each new British change in the direction of attack.²⁷ Some British officers "declared it the most skilfully directed and hardest-fought battle they had engaged in in America."²⁸ Once again arises the question of who directed this defensive battle. Dupuy credits no one with overall control. He states, "The operations on both sides were piecemeal, with no overall control exerted."²⁹ Lancaster says in retrospect that the battle "looks very much like a regimental commanders' battle, if not a company commanders'."³⁰ Carrington's analysis of the movements which took place, the attacks which were launched and

²⁵Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlvi, and p. 42. See also Digby, op. cit., p. 273.

²⁶Thomas Anburey, With Burgoyne from Quebec, ed. Sydney Jackman, (Toronto, Canada: Macmillan of Canada, 1963), p. 174.

²⁷Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlvi.

²⁸Charles B. Todd, The Real Benedict Arnold, (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1903), p. 149.

²⁹Dupuy and Dupuy, The Compact History..., p. 250.

³⁰Lancaster, op. cit., p. 311.

counter-attacks which were beaten off³¹ leads to the conclusion that some direction was present. Gates mentioned no leader in his report to the President of Congress.³² These discussions of the engagement do not negate the previous conclusion that General Arnold directed the American defense and counter-attacks. Gates' disregard of his contributions can be traced to his animosity toward Arnold.

Technically the Battle of Freeman's Farm was a victory for the British, because they remained masters of the field. However, Burgoyne had not accomplished his mission of getting through the American forces, and the losses sustained were such as to convince Anburey that the Americans had gained the real advantages.³³ Gates remained in his fortified position and had succeeded in his mission of halting the British advance.

The British army remained in their advanced positions throughout the night and on the following day established a defensive position within artillery range of the American lines.³⁴ Then began the long wait which lasted until October 7, when Burgoyne made a second attack against the American fortifications. If the British had won even a technical victory at Freeman's Farm, why did Burgoyne wait so long to attempt to exploit his success? Wilkinson relates that Burgoyne had decided to press the attack again the following morning, but allowed

³¹Carrington, op. cit., p. 342.

³²Nickerson, op. cit., p. 330.

³³Anburey, op. cit., p. 175. Burgoyne does not really deny this, as he states, "...no fruits, honour excepted, were attained by the preceding victory..." Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlix.

³⁴Burgoyne, ibid.

the advice of General Fraser to dissuade him.³⁵

Probably logistics prevented the Americans from attempting to continue the battle on September 20. Some accounts point out that supply was critically low—the troops on the left wing had only a "single round of cartridges left..."³⁶ and that, although only Gates knew it, the magazine was practically empty.³⁷ These conditions led Gates to refuse the permission Arnold requested to renew the attack on the twentieth.³⁸

There existed on the morning of the twentieth an anomalous situation: a subordinate in one army, Arnold, wishing to continue the attack and being refused permission, while in the other army a subordinate, Fraser, is dissuading his commander from pressing forward.

In the days of inaction following September 19, did Gates display competent leadership? If his logistic situation was truly so desperate, then he could hardly have taken the offensive. Moreover Gates could have gained little by offensive action on September 20. Defensive tactics had proved sufficient to accomplish his mission of stopping Burgoyne's advance. Based on knowledge of the logistical situation it is concluded that Gates took the most feasible course of action by remaining on the defensive following the September 19 engagement.

³⁵Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 250. However, Digby, op. cit., p. 275, says that both Phillips and Fraser believed the attack should have been renewed the following morning.

³⁶Lossing, Pictorial Field Book..., I, 57.

³⁷Neilson, op. cit., p. 147.

³⁸George Bancroft states that Gates' refusal to renew the attack on the twentieth ignited the Gates-Arnold quarrel in History of the United States of America, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1879), VI, 8.

Did Burgoyne forfeit a golden opportunity to strike a decisive blow on September 20? Wilkinson's account indicates that the Americans were so unprepared that had Burgoyne renewed the attack he would have probably won a decisive victory.³⁹ In his defense before the Parliamentary committee, Burgoyne states, "...I do not believe that with an army exhausted by a long and severe action, and deprived of an uncommon portion of officers, the question of attacking the enemy the next morning would have occurred to any man of professional judgment..."⁴⁰

Considering Burgoyne's situation, his estimate seems valid. The British had gained little or no intelligence of the enemy strength or dispositions during the battle. Burgoyne was aware of his own losses as the engagement ended. Thus his decision to hold his ground, fortify his position, and await developments appears quite logical.

The third phase encompasses the seventeen days during which Burgoyne waited behind his fortifications and Gates sat behind his. Burgoyne used two points to justify his inaction: He had received a letter from Clinton promising a diversion; his wounded and sick were recovering and he stated, "The more I delayed, the stronger I grew."⁴¹ Since Gates is credited with knowing that Burgoyne would eventually

³⁹Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 252. See also Nickerson, op. cit., p. 318, who says the fog prevented Burgoyne from attacking on the twentieth, but that he still proposed to renew the attack on the morning of the twenty-first.

⁴⁰Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 122. It is interesting to note that the three witnesses who were asked the question concerning resuming the attack on the twentieth had little to say. The Earl of Balcarras, who commanded the Light Infantry under General Fraser, declined to answer the question. Major Forbes, a member of the 9th Regiment, stated that he was in the hospital and could not give an opinion of his own. Lieutenant Colonel Kingston, Adjutant General, said he would have been sorry to have ordered an attack. Ibid., pp. 35, 63, and 79.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 17.

have to make another move, he can be justified in adopting the course of waiting.⁴² However, the situation was not completely quiet.

Burgoyne says that not a night passed without firing and sometimes concerted attacks were made on the "advanced picquets (sic)."⁴³

Lieutenant Digby was surprised at this waiting game, for he wrote, "I suppose seldom two armies remained looking at each other so long without coming to action."⁴⁴

While waiting for Clinton's diversion Burgoyne received the unwelcome news that an American force was operating in his rear. This force, which had been dispatched by Gates⁴⁵ to cut Burgoyne's supply line, had attacked Ticonderoga.⁴⁶ This attack meant that Burgoyne would have to fight his way north if he decided to retreat.

His logistic situation was worsening daily. Burgoyne had proposed to accumulate twenty-five days' supply before crossing the Hudson, but had actually managed to gather thirty days' provisions by September 13; he had not subsequently added to this reserve. At

⁴² Hudleston, op. cit., p. 185; and Lancaster, op. cit., p. 314.

⁴³ Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 124; and Amburey, op. cit., p. 180.

⁴⁴ Digby, op. cit., p. 284. He further stated that an American soldier wandered into the British camp by mistake, they were so close.

⁴⁵ Nickerson, op. cit., p. 288.

⁴⁶ Although there are some historians who claim that the fort was captured, the weight of evidence refutes this claim. Among those who support the thesis that the fort was captured are William M. Sloane, The French War and the Revolution, (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1898), p. 276; and Thomas R. Hay and M. R. Werner, The Admirable Trum-peter, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1941), p. 27. The best discussion of the successful British defense of the fort is found in Robert Tones, Battles of America by Sea and Land, (New York: Patterson & Neilson, 1878), I, 537; and in Charles Stedman, The History of the Origin, progress and termination of the American War, (London: J. Murray, 1794), I, 340.

best his army could subsist until October 13. Wishing to extend this period and gain more flexibility in waiting for Clinton, Burgoyne took the very feasible course of cutting the consumption rate.⁴⁷ This measure could only postpone the inevitable decision.

Why then did Burgoyne finally decide to attack? First and foremost was his continued belief in his mission. Second, he knew that Clinton was going to attempt a diversion on the lower Hudson and he was in hopes this would cause Gates to detach part of his force. Third, there was the matter of the American force operating in his rear and making the route of retreat more difficult. Last but not necessarily least was the supply shortage in his army. His decision was not triggered by Clinton's successful attack on the Highlands' forts.⁴⁸

The plan of attack which began the fourth phase on October 7 was a compromise between Burgoyne's original idea of attacking the American left and rear with a force of 4,000 and General Reidesel's proposal to retreat.⁴⁹ The scheme of maneuver which emerged called for a reconnaissance in force of 1,500 men, commanded by Burgoyne in person.⁵⁰

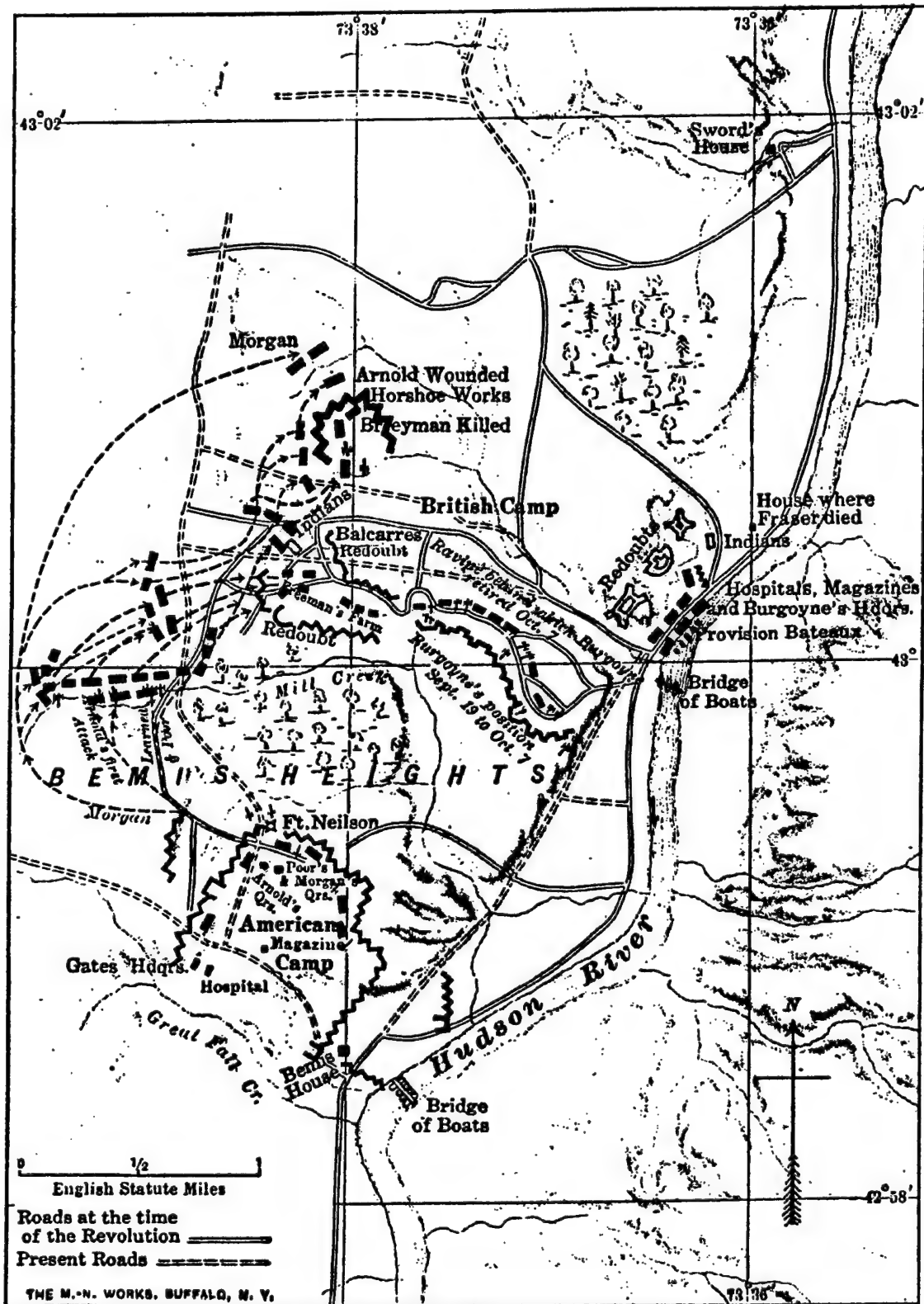
Reconnaissance in force is an acceptable tactical operation. It is a "...highly mobile operation, consisting of an attack con-

⁴⁷ Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. xlix.

⁴⁸ J. F. C. Fuller, Decisive Battles, their influence upon History and Civilization, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 550. Clinton accomplished this on October 6. No word of this success could have reached Burgoyne in time to influence his decision to attack on October 7.

⁴⁹ Nickerson, op. cit., pp. 356-357.

⁵⁰ Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 1.



Map of the Battle of Bemis Heights

Extracted from Eliza A. Avery, A History of the United States and Its People, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1909), p. 122.

ducted by all or a sizeable part of a force for the purpose of discovering and testing the enemy's strength, composition and dispositions."⁵¹ Burgoyne's stated objective can be considered operationally sound. This mission was to make a movement to the enemy's left "...not only to discover whether there were any possible means of forcing a passage should it be necessary to advance, or of dislodging him for the convenience of a retreat..."⁵² An additional mission of this force was to cover a forage expedition of the army.⁵³

An analysis of Burgoyne's stated mission clearly indicates that his reconnaissance in force was feasible. He had gathered little or no intelligence concerning enemy dispositions and a reconnaissance in force might uncover any weaknesses of the American position. It can be concluded that this was more logical than committing the entire force to another attack.

Historians, generally, have criticized Burgoyne for adopting this form of offensive action. Critical assessments range from "a folly"⁵⁴ through "a stupid, bungling shot in the dark, completely unworthy of a soldier of Burgoyne's experience"⁵⁵ to a characterization of "radically unsound."⁵⁶ Regardless of such criticisms Burgoyne's plan seems a logical and desirable course of military action, had he

⁵¹U. S. Department of the Army, Field Manual 100-5, Field Service Regulations: Operations, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1962), p. 71.

⁵²Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 1.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Nickerson, op. cit., p. 358.

⁵⁵Dupuy and Dupuy, The Compact History..., p. 258.

⁵⁶Fuller, op. cit., p. 553.

only made provisions to "exploit any unexpected success, or to take additional security measures"⁵⁷ to extricate the force if it became decisively engaged. Although Nickerson says that plans for either a general attack on October 8 or a retreat on the eleventh had been contemplated, depending on the results of this reconnaissance in force,⁵⁸ no mention of such future contingency plans can be found in Burgoyne's defense or in statements of any of the witnesses eventually appearing before the Parliamentary committee.

The reconnaissance in force lasted fifty-two minutes.⁵⁹ Once again Burgoyne marched forward in three columns and moved approximately three-quarters of a mile southwest of Freeman's Farm, where the force halted on the north side of Hill Creek and deployed. It was to proceed no further, for at this point Colonel Morgan led an American attack on the British left flank and Poor's Brigade attacked the center.⁶⁰

Accounts of the subsequent short, furious action relate that the British force not only failed in its mission, but was also forced to retreat. Burgoyne, by his personal direction of the action and calmness under fire, kept the retreat from becoming a disastrous rout.⁶¹

⁵⁷FM 100-5, p. 72. ⁵⁸Nickerson, op. cit., p. 357.

⁵⁹Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 270.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 268. Wilkinson claims credit for discovering the approach of Burgoyne's force. He credits Morgan with the proposal to attack the British left flank. However, General Lincoln is credited with suggesting this maneuver by Bird, op. cit., p. 228.

⁶¹Digby, op. cit., p. 289; and Lancaster, op. cit., p. 308. John Marshall, The Life of George Washington, (Philadelphia: C. P. Wayne, 1804), III, 390, credits Burgoyne's orders to the Light Infantry as being the key decision made to cover the retreat.

The British regained the security of their fortifications before they were attacked in full force by the pursuing Americans. Burgoyne's concern over his defensive posture was clearly reflected in his orders to Lieutenant Anburey to "defend this post to the very last man."⁶² There was reason for concern. Over 400 men, six pieces of artillery, and many officers had been lost.⁶³

The initial American attack, led by General Arnold, struck first at the position held by Lord Balcarras' light infantry and was repulsed. The American general then shifted his direction, assaulted and broke through the position held by the Germans under Lieutenant Colonel Breymann. During this second assault Breymann was killed,⁶⁴

⁶²Anburey, op. cit., p. 185.

⁶³Nickerson, op. cit., p. 364. Among the officers killed was Brigadier General Simon Fraser. Burgoyne delayed his retreat for one full day to carry out Fraser's wish to be buried in the redoubt which he had occupied. The shooting of Fraser is credited to one Timothy Murphy of Morgan's Rifle Corps. John H. Preston relates that Arnold urged Morgan to pick off Fraser in Revolution 1776, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933), p. 209. On the other hand, John W. DePeyster, Major General Philip Schuyler and the Burgoyne Campaign, (New York: Holt Brothers Printers, 1877), p. 23; Graham, op. cit., p. 162; and Stone, op. cit., p. 61, all credit Morgan with the idea and with giving the orders to fire. However, Stone includes a letter on p. 273 which indicates that some one other than Murphy killed the British general. During Fraser's funeral the Americans kept up a constant cannonade of the hilltop. Although Gates himself is quoted with having said he would have stopped the firing had he known a funeral was in progress, some authors have asserted that the firing was a "minute gun" in honor of the gallant Fraser. See Lossing, Pictorial Field Book..., I, 66; Headley, op. cit., p. 277; and Hudleston, op. cit., p. 198. Hudleston attributes the story of the "minute gun" to Lieutenant Colonel Kingston, although that officer did not mention this in his testimony before Parliament.

⁶⁴Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 11. In commenting on the behavior of the German troops under fire Anburey, op. cit., p. 186, wrote that the Germans ran after firing one volley "either for want of courage or presence of mind." F. E. Whitton concurs in the "very unusual" behavior of the German troops in The American War of Independence, (London: John Murray, 1931), p. 189. Digby, op. cit., p. 288, says that "Bremen (sic) fell nobly...and only by his death blotted out part of the stain his countrymen so justly merited from that day's behav-

and Arnold was wounded.⁶⁵

Although accounts conflict as to how he arrived there,⁶⁶ there is no debate about Arnold's presence on the field at this engagement. His personal leadership and bravery under fire matched that of General Fraser and Burgoyne himself. Accounts of this engagement are colorful, emotional, and replete with instances of the soldiers eagerly following Arnold. Although Wilkinson⁶⁷ and Lancas-

ior." Howard H. Peckham, The War for Independence, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 75; and Bird, op. cit., p. 246, assert that Breymann was killed by one of his own men. Bird even describes the killer as being a big man with "waxed mustaches."

⁶⁵Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 273. All historians agree that Arnold was wounded. Marion O. French, America and War, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: The Military Service Publishing Co., 1947), p. 46, states, "Arnold reputedly was shot in the leg from behind by Arbuthnot, the sentinel that Gates had set over him." This is pure conjecture, as no other authority intimates even the possibility of this.

⁶⁶Gates' refusal to mention Arnold in his report to Congress and his detaching of Morgan's Rifle Corps from his division angered Arnold to the point that he requested a pass to Philadelphia. Gates readily gave him an open letter to the President of Congress. This either did not suit Arnold or he was urged to remain by other officers. In any event, Gates had in effect relieved him of command. This was Gates' prerogative as Commanding General. Conflicting versions as to Arnold's behavior on October 7 before he rode into action range from his pleading with Gates to be allowed to go and see "what the firing was about" to charging from his tent, mounting his horse and galloping off. See Wilkinson, op. cit., p. 273, who states that Arnold was intoxicated. Other accounts are contained in Carl Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, (New York: The Viking Press, 1941), p. 163; Jacobs, op. cit., p. 38; and Bancroft, op. cit., p. 12. George F. Scheer and Hugh F. Rankin, Rebels and Redcoats, (Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Co., 1957), p. 281, relate the story of Arnold pleading with Gates, while Arnold, op. cit., p. 198, contains the story of his charging from the tent.

⁶⁷Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 273, says "...he neither rendered service, nor deserved credit on that day, and the wound he received alone saved him from being overwhelmed, by the torrent of General Gates's (sic) good fortune and popularity."

ter⁶⁸ tend to deprecate Arnold's leadership, the weight of evidence credits him with excellent command and control of the American action.

Although he had been relieved of command of his division, command of the field fell to him by virtue of his being the senior officer present. Except for French's remark concerning a sentinel,⁶⁹ there is no evidence of Arnold's being ordered to remain behind the lines and therefore no reason to charge him with disobedience of an order. Three subordinate commanders---Poor, Learned, and Morgan---followed his orders without question.⁷⁰ Had he been under some type of restraint, they undoubtedly would have been aware of it.

Accounts of gallant leadership of small units are numerous. Major Williams of the British artillery kept a battery in action until all of his men were either killed or wounded and his horses destroyed.⁷¹ An American soldier named Haines succeeded in capturing a British brass twelve-pounder by killing three of the enemy.⁷² On the British side Burgoyne praised Major Acland's leadership of the grenadiers.⁷³

With the coming of darkness the Americans broke off the attack.

⁶⁸Lancaster, op. cit., p. 316, says that Arnold's two charges were of no value. "Arnold's two bravura charges against the redoubts---the first of which failed completely---seem only to have increased American casualties, particularly since Von Breymann's men were apparently on the point of flight anyway. The two slashes at the redoubts played no part whatsoever in the outcome of the day."

⁶⁹See Footnote 65 supra.

⁷⁰Bird, op. cit., p. 241.

⁷¹Francis Duncan, History of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, (London: John Murray, 1872), I, 315.

⁷²Frederic Kidder, History of the First New Hampshire Regiment in the War of the Revolution, (Albany, New York: Joel Munsell, 1868), p. 23.

⁷³Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 1. Amburey, op. cit., p. 186, tells the story of Acland's capture when the soldier who was carrying him was overtaken by the pursuing Americans.

A few additional items of interest exist concerning their command arrangements: After Arnold was wounded no one assumed overall command of the regiments on the field. Gates had not been forward at all, but had spent the afternoon discussing the merits of the Revolution with Sir Francis Clark, one of Burgoyne's aides, who had been wounded and captured.⁷⁴ Although some writers have credited Gates with remaining behind and directing the battle from his tent,⁷⁵ available facts indicate that his knowledge of the current situation could at best have been only hazy and his direction of the battle non-existent.

Burgoyne's reconnaissance in force had not accomplished its mission. By failing to provide for additional security or possible extrication of his force, he came close to losing his entire command. In his defense before Parliament Burgoyne stated that he had been informed that Gates was "determined to receive the attack in his lines."⁷⁶ Arnold's actions had not only spoiled Burgoyne's plan, but had rendered his present position untenable.⁷⁷ An immediate decision had to be made and promptly executed if the British army was to be saved!

Under cover of darkness Burgoyne shifted his position and on

⁷⁴Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 269 fn., who relates that Gates remarked, "Did you ever hear such an impudent son of a ***!" Shortly after this Clark died.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 266 fn. Wilkinson says that Gates could hardly have known what was going on, as he never visited the pickets at all. Willard M. Wallace believes that Gates' behavior in the conduct of the battle was quite proper in Appeal to Arms, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 167.

⁷⁶Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 17. Digby, op. cit., p. 291, confirms this view.

⁷⁷Burgoyne, loc. cit., p. 18. See also Amburey, op. cit., p. 187; and Nickerson, op. cit., p. 367.

the morning of the eighth his army stood in battle order.⁷⁸ He did not attempt a counterattack to restore his former position and well that he did not, for Gates had ordered General Lincoln and the American right flank forward during the night.⁷⁹ Not having been committed the previous day, these troops were fresh and probably eager to participate in an action of their own.

Although Burgoyne's army "continued offering battle to the enemy in their new position the whole day,"⁸⁰ the Americans did not renew the attack. At one time Lieutenant Anburey believed that an attack was imminent, as "a very large body, consisting of several brigades, drew up in line of battle, with artillery, and began to cannonade us."⁸¹ The Americans did continue artillery fire throughout the day and during General Fraser's funeral,⁸² but no general action took place.

The fifth and last phase began when General Burgoyne decided that a general retreat was the only device for saving his army. He sent Lieutenant Colonel Sutherland to reconnoiter northward up the Hudson.⁸³ The only other important event of October 8, aside from Fraser's funeral, was General Lincoln's being wounded by a sniper.⁸⁴

⁷⁸Burgoyne, loc. cit., p. 31, quoting the testimony of the Earl of Balcarras, who said that the change of position was made "in good order without loss."

⁷⁹Nickerson, op. cit., p. 370. Anburey, op. cit., p. 187, relates: "... (W)e heard the enemy bringing up their artillery, no doubt with a view to attack us at daybreak."

⁸⁰Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. li.

⁸¹Anburey, op. cit., p. 188. He also mentioned a howitzer round landing amid a large column, causing them to flee into the woods.

⁸²See Footnote 63 supra.

⁸³Nickerson, op. cit., p. 371.

⁸⁴Bird, op. cit., p. 254. This left Gates with seven brigadier generals and no deputy commander.

Should Burgoyne have retreated the night of the seventh or during daylight hours of the eighth? Although withdrawal during the night of the seventh would not have been harassed by enemy pressure, it would have been undertaken by a disorganized British force. A daylight withdrawal on the eighth would have invited immediate American attack. Burgoyne's decision to remain in position through the eighth was valid, despite Baroness Reidesel's criticism of the "unnecessary delay" occasioned by Fraser's funeral.⁸⁵

General withdrawal of the British army began at nine o'clock the evening of the eighth. The withdrawal was necessary, according to Burgoyne, to prevent the enemy from turning his right.⁸⁶ Although this movement was begun "within musket shot of the enemy" all equipment and baggage was taken along.⁸⁷

The withdrawal was skillfully conducted. Burgoyne knew the hazards of a night march, especially when the entire baggage train was confined to one column along a single road. His orders to prevent accidents and his instructions to Phillips "to pay attention only to the object of covering the troops...or taking a position to allow them to form"⁸⁸ indicate his command ability. The Americans did not attack the retreating column, nor did they begin a general

⁸⁵Mark Van Doren, An Autobiography of America, (New York: Albert & Charles Boni, 1929), p. 125, quoting the Journals of the Baroness Reidesel. She had joined the force when it halted at Skenesborough on the way south. The delay for the funeral has been criticized by no other contemporary source.

⁸⁶Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. li.

⁸⁷Anburey, op. cit., p. 189. He further states that the American officers with lanterns in their hands could be seen riding about in front of their lines.

⁸⁸Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 126.

pursuit until late on the ninth. Nickerson ascribes this delay to the necessity of resupply, a process which consumed almost an entire day.⁸⁹

On the morning of the ninth Burgoyne halted on what he termed "very advantageous ground,"⁹⁰ needing the pause to refresh his troops and allow his supply bateaux to come abreast. Resupply was accomplished; the move to the north then continued. Once again Baroness Reidesel criticized the delay. She stated that Burgoyne halted to have the artillery lined up and counted.⁹¹ Late the night of the ninth the British force again halted—location: Saratoga. The heavy rain during the withdrawal made everyone quite miserable, but, as Anburey relates, "... (I)n great measure prevented the pursuit of the enemy."⁹²

The final ranks of Burgoyne's army closed at Saratoga the morning of October 10 in the redoubts which they had constructed on the way south. Ahead was a detachment of Americans, commanded by Colonel Fellows, who had instructions to block Burgoyne's retreat. Critics of the British rate of speed on the ninth and inaction on

⁸⁹ Nickerson, op. cit., p. 373.

⁹⁰ Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 126. Louis C. Duncan, Medical men in the American Revolution, 1775-1783, (Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: Medical Field Service School, 1931), p. 253; and Benson J. Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Six or the War of Independence, (New York: Edward Walker, 1847), p. 239, discuss Burgoyne's abandoning his hospital, leaving the wounded to the care of Gates.

⁹¹ Mark Van Doren, An Autobiography..., p. 126.

⁹² Anburey, op. cit., p. 190. Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 281, says this rain prevented Burgoyne from reaching Saratoga before day, in which case Fellows' troops would have been captured or dispersed and Burgoyne could have reached Fort Edward in safety. During this retreat Burgoyne ordered General Schuyler's house burned, as it would interfere with artillery fire and also to prevent the Americans from occupying it. Digby, op. cit., p. 301.

the tenth assert that Burgoyne allowed Fellows to escape across the river.⁹³

In preparation for further retreat Burgoyne dispatched a party of workmen with a strong guard to repair bridges and open a road to Fort Edward on the west side of the Hudson. However, the enemy appeared in such force on the heights of the Fish-kill that the troops were recalled and the Provincial guards ran, leaving the labor force to escape as they might.⁹⁴

Burgoyne was firmly ensconced on October 10, when the head of Gates' army approached at approximately four in the afternoon. No action, except firing at the supply bateaux, occurred the rest of the day. Thick fog enveloped Burgoyne's position on the morning of the eleventh, but Gates' army began its forward movement once again. Nixon's and Learned's brigades almost walked into Burgoyne's defensive positions.⁹⁵ Gates has been criticized for moving forward without intelligence of Burgoyne's position or the benefit of scouts to his front.⁹⁶ In this instance he was as deficient in this facet of leader-

⁹³ Among these critics, once again, is the Baroness Reidesel, who accused Burgoyne of entertaining his mistress in Schuyler's house, as quoted in Mark Van Doren, An Autobiography..., p. 127. Kingsford, op. cit., p. 263, says the delay was an additional proof of Burgoyne's determination to surrender. See also Lancaster, op. cit., p. 317; Jacobs, op. cit., p. 40; and Louis C. Duncan, Medical men..., p. 245. Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 11, mentions the body of American troops that escaped across the river. Amburey, op. cit., p. 192, supports this statement. Nickerson, op. cit., p. 377, charges Burgoyne with having left Fellows unmolested the entire day of October 10.

⁹⁴ Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XIV, p. 11.

⁹⁵ Wilkinson, op. cit., I, 289, credits himself with ordering General Learned to halt. Bird, op. cit., p. 259, however, says the forward commanders halted on their own judgment.

⁹⁶ Scheer and Rankin, op. cit., p. 283, ascribe Gates' orders to inaccurate intelligence, while Carrington, op. cit., p. 351, says that Gates was without any reconnaissance whatever.

ship as Burgoyne had been at Freeman's Farm. As the fog lifted both Nixon and Learned were able to see the British drawn up in battle order and were successful in retiring in good order with relatively few casualties. Their good fortune caused Burgoyne to lament this "accident that prevented the enemy's design...as one of the most adverse strokes of fortune in the whole campaign."⁹⁷

Burgoyne called his general officers into council of war to review the situation and formulate feasible courses of action. Five courses were considered:

"1st. To wait in the present position an attack from the enemy or the chance of favorable events.

"2d. To attack the enemy.

"3d. To retreat repairing the bridges as the army moves for the artillery in order to force the passage of the ford.

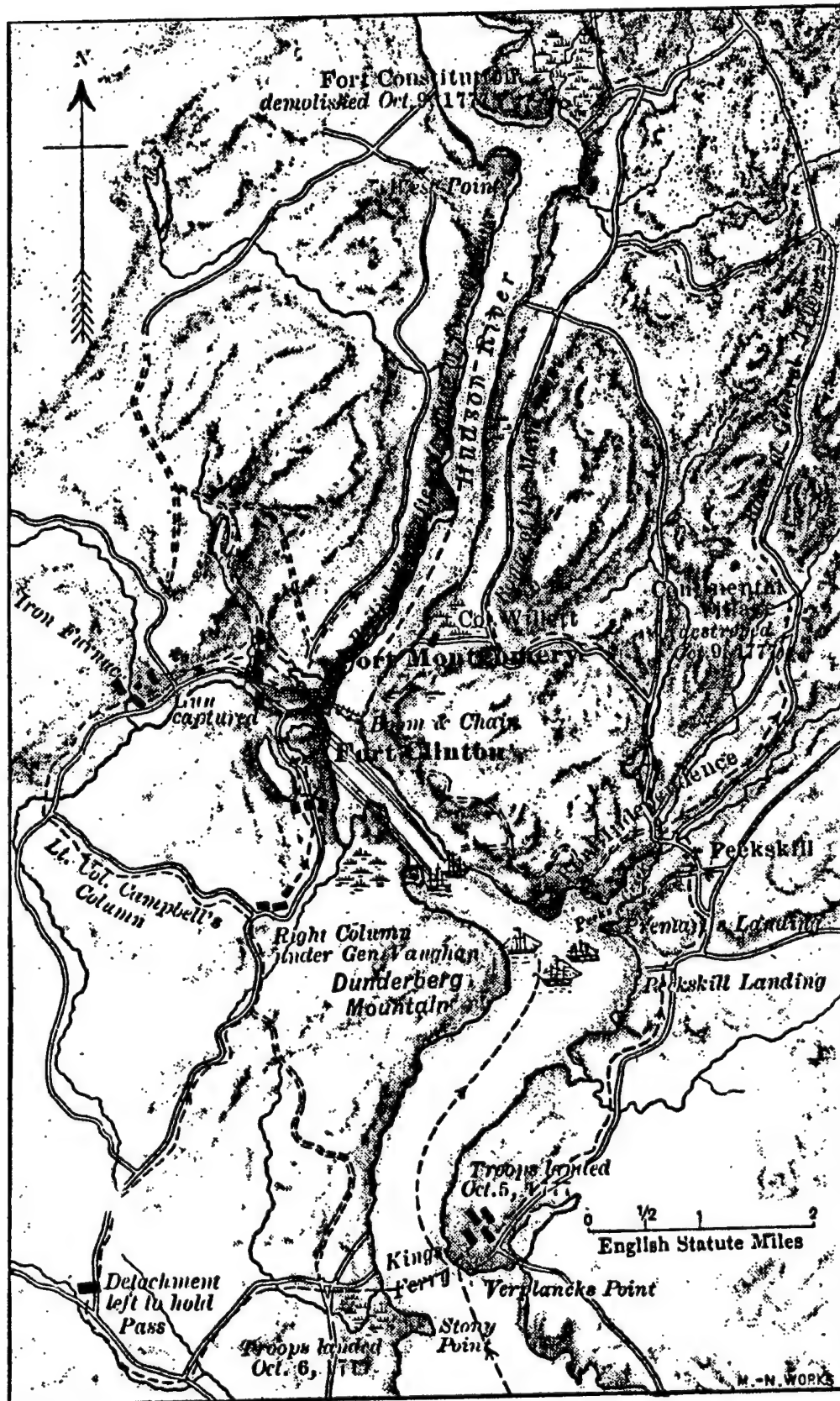
"4th. To retreat by night, leaving the artillery and the baggage; and should it be found impracticable to force the passage with musketry; to attempt the upper ford, or the passage round Lake George.

"5th. In case the enemy, be extending to their left, leave their rear open, to march rapidly for Albany."⁹⁸

Following due consideration the first course was discarded for lack of supply. ("Favorable events" could only have referred to the hoped-for expedition of Clinton.) The second and third were discarded as being unadvisable, desperate, and impracticable. The fifth had merit, except that the desired opening was not to be seen. With the

⁹⁷Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 130. He felt that had these regiments continued to move forward he would have been able to have inflicted a decisive defeat on the Americans even at this stage of the operation.

⁹⁸Ibid., Appendix XV, p. 1v.



Map of the Attack on Forts Montgomery and Clinton

Extracted from Elroy M. Avery, *A History of the United States*
and its People, (Cleveland, Ohio: The Burrows Brothers Co., 1909),
p. 117.

fourth choice left as the only feasible course of action, it was chosen. However, it depended on secrecy of movement and reports from the scouts showed the enemy in such strength as to immediately discover any movement.⁹⁹

What could be done? Apparently the long march of the Canada army had ground to a hopeless halt. The only hope was an eleventh hour arrival of Clinton, who would fall on Gates from the rear. But Clinton had returned to New York and no messengers had arrived over that long, dangerous route from the south. The condition of the army was described by Anburey as "truly calamitous."¹⁰⁰ Burgoyne's officers in their testimony before Parliament all commented on the state of the army.¹⁰¹

Burgoyne, as the commander, faced a lonely, bitter decision. He had not and could not accomplish his assigned mission within the capabilities of his command. If he sat in his fortified position, his troops would slowly starve, desert, or be killed in small skirmish actions. The situation demanded the wisest leadership. He felt that the only feasible course of action left open to him was that of capitulation. By this means he might possibly save his army. He applied to the enemy commander for negotiations leading to surrender on honorable

⁹⁹Ibid., Appendix XV, p. lvi. There is a difference of opinion as to what actually transpired once the scouts had made this report. The Baroness Reidesel asserted that "the whole army clamored for a retreat, and my husband promised to make it possible...", as quoted in Mark Van Doren, An Autobiography..., p. 129. Edward Channing says that a contingent of Canadian auxiliaries and Indians did succeed in escaping to Canada in A History of the United States, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1935), III, 271. The Earl of Harrington refuted the rumor that General Phillips had offered to escape through the Americans and make his way to Fort Ticonderoga. See Burgoyne, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁰⁰Anburey, op. cit., p. 193.

¹⁰¹Burgoyne, op. cit., passim.

terms.¹⁰²

Negotiations lasted from October 14 to October 17. The final terms of the Convention granted British personnel permission to return to England on the promise that they would not serve in America again during the present war. On the night of October 16 a messenger arrived with the news that Clinton had captured the American forts in the Highlands.¹⁰³ What was to be done? Could Clinton reach Burgoyne in time to save his army? Should the agreement with Gates be concluded? Another British council of war convened and recommended that they accept the Convention proposed and the army lay down its arms as agreed.¹⁰⁴ Too little, too late could not save the Canada army.

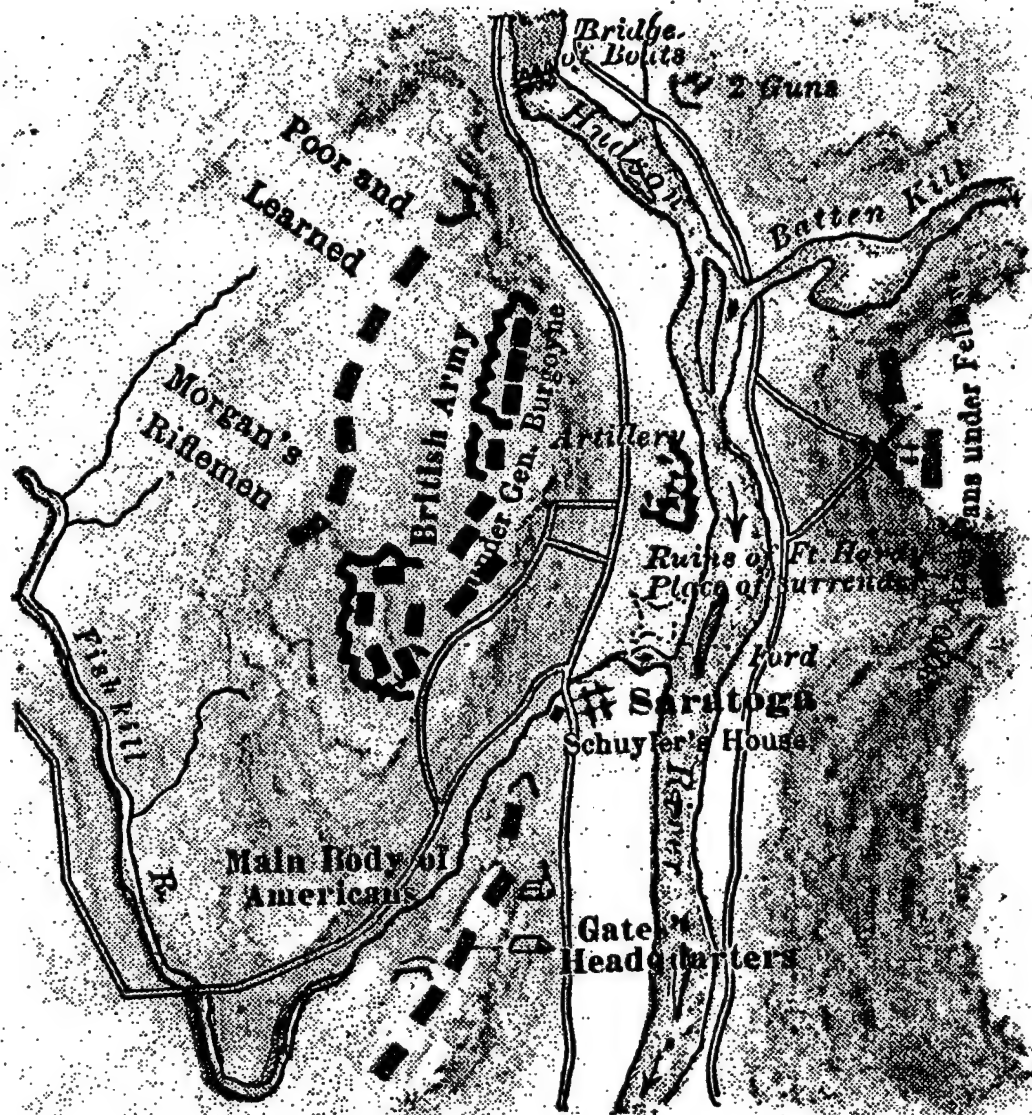
Burgoyne's troops grounded their arms and started their long march, which was to take them to Virginia via New England. Gates' conduct at the surrender ceremony has been commended, in that he did not permit his own army to witness the affair.¹⁰⁵ However, some construe this action as denying the American army the satisfaction of

¹⁰²Ibid., Appendix XV, p. lvi.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 131. What Burgoyne did not know was that General Clinton returned to New York City instead of continuing north to link up with him. Historians have disputed Clinton's role and the possible effect of earlier or stronger action on his part. See Jane Clark, "Responsibility for the failure of the Burgoyne Campaign," American Historical Review, XXXV (April, 1930), 559; Wallace, op. cit., p. 164; and Nickerson, op. cit., p. 342.

¹⁰⁴Burgoyne, op. cit., Appendix XVII, p. lx. Kingsford, op. cit., p. 275, says that Burgoyne's course in stalling for time "reflected little honour on the national character...an exhibition of weakness and folly." Francis V. Greene believes that Gates was aware of Clinton's movements in The Revolutionary War and the Military Policy of the United States, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 126. Knollenberg, op. cit., p. 29, concurs in this view.

¹⁰⁵Neilson, op. cit., p. 218; and Lossing, Seventeen Hundred and Seventy-Six..., p. 240.



Map of Burgoyne's Surrender at Saratoga

seeing the results of their efforts.

The Convention provided the final source of historical disagreement over the leadership qualities of Gates, the victor, and Burgoyne, the vanquished. Gates has been accused of exceeding his powers in entering into the negotiations and giving terms.¹⁰⁶ Others have called the terms a "trick by which Burgoyne tried to outwit Gates..."¹⁰⁷ In his own report to Congress Gates alleged that there was "no time to contest the capitulation..."¹⁰⁸ Even in victory there was censure for Gates, although Congress ordered a vote of thanks and a medal struck in his honor.¹⁰⁹

Willingness to accept responsibility for one's action is an index of capacity for leadership. Following the Convention of Saratoga, Burgoyne willingly shouldered responsibility for all actions which he controlled. His solicitous concern for his subordinates and the prisoner army is praised by Anburey: "General Burgoyne has done everything in this convention for the good of the troops, consistent with the service of his King and country: All that wisdom, valour, and a strict sense of honour could suggest."¹¹⁰

To act in such a fashion despite the personal psychological ramifications of an ignominious defeat seems particularly praiseworthy. Although the scope of this study does not permit detailed analysis of

¹⁰⁶Lancaster, op. cit., p. 318.

¹⁰⁷Greene, op. cit., p. 129. Another view is held by Robert J. Stack in "The Public Faith is Broke," The Infantry Journal, XLIV (April, 1937), 152.

¹⁰⁸Journals of the Continental Congress, ed. Worthington C. Ford, (34 vols.; Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), IX, 856.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., IX, 862.

¹¹⁰Anburey, op. cit., p. 195.

Burgoyne's life and actions after Saratoga, it is pertinent to note that his future years were largely occupied with efforts to secure just and fair Parliamentary and public evaluation of his actions as a British commander in North America.

CHAPTER VII

LEADERSHIP EVALUATED

The course of history has been vastly affected by what happened on the plains of Saratoga in 1777. Horatio Gates and John Burgoyne earned lasting fame there. What can be concluded about the leadership exercised?

From the very inception of the idea of an invasion from Canada the British Ministry failed to insure that the task was properly understood, supervised, and accomplished. Communication difficulties existant in that era were tremendous, but they do not entirely excuse Lord Germain's evident failure to give clear, concise orders to his commanders. His negligence was a basic leadership defect.

Burgoyne's command was not employed in accordance with its capabilities. The Ministry, lacking accurate intelligence about the terrain and strength of the enemy to be encountered, assembled a force of insufficient strength. Burgoyne either failed to detect or to correct this erroneous underestimation. By detaching units to raid Bennington he further weakened his already inadequate force and even more drastically reduced the capabilities of his command.

In various instances Burgoyne failed to make sound and timely decisions. When he chose to move via the slow Skenesborough route,

he tendered the enemy the priceless time needed to regroup, reinforce, and destroy stores of supplies potentially available to him. When Burgoyne delayed at Fort Edward to build up a thirty day supply level, he was following the only course possible at the moment. But other choices could have existed, had his actions months earlier in Canada been more timely and sound and included accurate evaluation of and attention to transport and supply requirements.

Tactical and technical proficiency seems to intertwine itself with timely and sound decisions. Although Burgoyne's professional proficiency had the basis of his years of prior service and seems intrinsically sound and adequate, there exists throughout the campaign a deplorable lack of accurate intelligence concerning the enemy. If Burgoyne's tactical and technical decisions are evaluated in the light of the information he possessed, he can generally be commended.

On the other hand, the absence of proper intelligence and information could be considered a technical deficiency chargeable to Burgoyne. If so, he violated this principle of leadership. Specific instances where inadequate or erroneous intelligence instigated improper tactical maneuvers are the plan of attack employed at Freeman's Farm, the failure to renew the attack on September 20, the reconnaissance in force on October 7, and the long wait between the two dates just mentioned.

The decision to retreat after the Battle of Bemis Heights on October 7 was sound and timely, but its technical execution displayed disgraceful timing. Had Burgoyne covered the nineteen miles from Bemis Heights to Fort Edward in the most rapid manner possible, he probably could have found safety there before he was surrounded. When he used three days to traverse the meager nine miles to his

former encampment at Saratoga, he tendered to his enemy another priceless opportunity. This they hastened to grasp, thereby engraving the word "Saratoga" on history's eternal shaft.

The 20th Century leader would quickly term Gentleman Johnny indifferent and callous in his knowledge of his men and his concern for their welfare. However this principle of leadership must be viewed in the light of 18th Century environment and customs. For the day, Burgoyne displayed great concern for his men and their welfare, and the final decision to capitulate stands as a salient tribute to his concern for the individual soldier.

In 18th Century warfare the leader most often "set the example" through his own personal bravery under fire. Burgoyne and his subordinate officers can only be admired for their gallantry in action. Their inspirational conduct won the acclaim of the enemy, motivated their own troops to greater efforts, and actually did much to counter the overwhelming American numerical superiority. Other aspects of Burgoyne's personal conduct would certainly be reviled as poor example in 1965 (i.e., his mistress, his tremendous collection of baggage, his elaborate provision for his own comfort), but his actions were typical of the British officer of 1777 and elicited no criticism or comment.

Vast changes have been wrought since 1777 in methods, techniques, and degree of keeping troops informed, training them as a team, and developing a sense of responsibility in subordinates, so it is here again desirable to evaluate in light of 18th Century practices. Burgoyne seems to have done well in terms of what the era expected. He informed his various subordinates as to current situation through councils of war, proclamations, exhortations, and

daily orders. Of course, there was no attempt in that day to explain the whys and wherefores of a mission to the common soldier. He was only told what the leader felt he should know or could understand. Burgoyne had a truly conglomerate force to weld into a team---British regulars, German mercenaries, Canadians, Indians, and American Loyalists. Lack of contemporary comment to the contrary indicates that he did achieve satisfactory teamwork. There are allusions to minor animosities between the Germans and the British, but this seems to have been countered most effectively by the excellent relations Burgoyne maintained with the German General Reidesel. Again lack of testimony to the contrary leads to the conclusion that Burgoyne did not fail to develop an adequate sense of responsibility in his subordinates.

Did John Burgoyne seek responsibility? His critics have amply proved that he did through the clamor they have raised over the matter of his seeking the responsibilities of a higher command. Did he take responsibility for his actions? Throughout the campaign he most definitely accepted full responsibility for all that his command did or failed to do. Even when he criticized Reidesel for lax execution of orders, he in no way implied that anyone other than himself bore responsibility for actually dispatching the unfortunate expedition. Moreover Burgoyne accepted total responsibility for his army's capitulation; his subsequent activities in England were directed toward justification and explanation of his actions, not evasion of responsibility.

There remains one further principle of leadership: "Know yourself and seek self improvement." No data relevant to this point is to be found. Actually, it seems such a personal and subjective

matter that perhaps only Burgoyne himself could have provided the evaluation.

In the American camp General Horatio Gates never achieved stature comparable to Burgoyne's in the 18th Century manner of "setting the example." He set no personal example of conduct under fire for his troops; in fact, he did not even appear on the actual field of combat. The sole record of his public appearance before his troops is during the movement forward to Bemis Heights. Perhaps Gates' deficiency in setting an example proved insignificant, because Arnold and various brigade and regimental commanders provided such gallant personal leadership under fire.

Gates did not employ his command in accordance with its capabilities. His error on this principle happened to be the exact opposite of the British mistake. Gates at no time employed the maximum capability of his strong force. Had he done so on either September 19 or October 7, he could probably have terminated the British campaign at that moment in an even more decisive manner than the actual final outcome.

Were the American leaders technically and tactically proficient? Some of them (for example, Washington and Gates) had garnered military experience with British units before the Revolution. Many others had only "on-the-job training" as hostilities progressed. Instances which illustrate excellent proficiency are St. Clair's evacuation of Ticonderoga, Schuyler's conduct of the delaying action, and Arnold's tactical maneuvers on September 19 and October 7. Illustrations of lack of professional proficiency are the failure to exploit October 7's success and the October 11 forward movement without adequate intelligence.

Although Washington admonished his officers to constantly improve their professional knowledge, there is little evidence to indicate how much or little self-improvement actually took place. As stated with reference to Burgoyne, probably only the individual concerned can evaluate his own knowledge of himself.

The common American soldier may have been a bit better known to his commander than was his British counterpart and there may have been more concern for his welfare. Especially was this true of the militiaman, who likely lived in civilian life as a neighbor to his military commander. Greater concern for individual rights and greater dissemination of ideological information probably also existed among the American forces. These concepts were part of the Revolutionary atmosphere in the colonies.

The American task in the Saratoga area was scarcely capable of misunderstanding. The invading British army had to be halted. By either negligence or design Gates, in his personal absence from the battle field, relegated the supervision and accomplishment of the task to his subordinate commanders. Fortunately for the American cause Arnold, Morgan, and others responded adequately to the requirements of this principle of leadership.

Most of Gates' decisions were admirably sound and timely and provided much basis for his eventual victory. Particularly noteworthy in respect to this principle of leadership was the move forward to Bemis Heights, the plan for defensive fortifications there, the assumption of the defensive rather than the offensive role, and the detailing of Lincoln's force to the British rear. Gates, on the other hand, rather consistently failed to totally exploit his successes and, like Burgoyne, advanced upon at least one occasion with a woeful lack of

intelligence as to what lay ahead. Only chance avoided the disaster he thus invited.

There is no evidence that any American leader sought to evade responsibility for his actions at Saratoga. Relieving Arnold from command was Gates' prerogative, for which he accepted full responsibility. Similarly Arnold stood willing to accept sole responsibility for his peculiar assumption of command on October 7 and his actions during that day's combat.

Reference cannot be found concerning American regard to the two remaining principles of leadership: "Train your men as a team," and "Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates." Adequate consideration must have been given. Otherwise contemporary writers would doubtless have penned criticism.

The outcome of the Battle of Saratoga was, of course, victory for the American force and total capitulation for the British. It is just to say that the British risked readily avoidable defeat at many points by violating accepted principles of leadership and that disregard of such principles led logically to their ultimate capitulation. The Americans cannot claim perfection in their application of leadership principles, but their triumph seems largely attributable to the fact that their abuses were less flagrant than those of the British. While not the sole factor in determining outcome, leadership can justly be termed of paramount importance.

It is significant and somewhat amazing to reaffirm the constancy of basic principles of leadership. Today's acceptable doctrine was equally valid 188 years ago, despite differences in method and technique that changing times and environment must bring. The lesson of Saratoga resounds clearly through the years: Correct application of

the tried and true principles of leadership presages success---
their disregard invites disaster.

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